

Spirit of St. Paul



St. Paul Lutheran Church, East Lansing, MI

December 2009

Pastor's Page **Rev. Richard A. Moe**

It is a shock to me that we are already in December. The holidays are upon us and I've heard people lament that they haven't started shopping. I've also heard people mention that gifts will be more practical this year. But it is still the time in which we celebrate the joy that comes into the world with the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. The love he comes to share enlightens the darkness of this world.

Of course we have a lot of things going on during the Advent and Christmas seasons. Here is a schedule of activities here at Saint Paul's:

November 29th - 1st Sunday in Advent: 8:30AM & 11:00AM Worship and Holy Communion

December 2nd – First Advent Wednesday Evening Service at 7:00PM

December 6th - 2nd Sunday in Advent: Worship at 8:30AM & 11:00AM
Covenant Players, Christian Drama

December 9th – Second Advent Wednesday Evening Service at 7:00PM

December 13th - 3rd Sunday in Advent: at 8:30AM Holy Communion and at 11:00AM Holy Communion with **Sunday School Christmas Program**

December 16th – Third Advent Wednesday Evening Service at 7:00PM

December 20th - 4th Sunday in Advent: at 8:30AM & 11:00AM Holy Communion & 9:30AM **Christmas Music Celebration with Choir & Soloists.** No Sunday School

December 24th – **Christmas Eve Candlelight Family Communion** – 5:00PM
Christmas Eve Candlelight Traditional Communion – 10:00PM

December 27th - 1st Sunday of Christmas. No Sunday School

December 30th – **New Year's Eve Worship** (Thursday) 12:00 Noon & 5:00PM

May this be a holiday in which we are restored by the message of God's reaching out to all people no matter their situation in life. Christ came to us in a world darkened by war and oppression. So he can come to us today to restore us also. Have a blessed Advent and Christmas season.

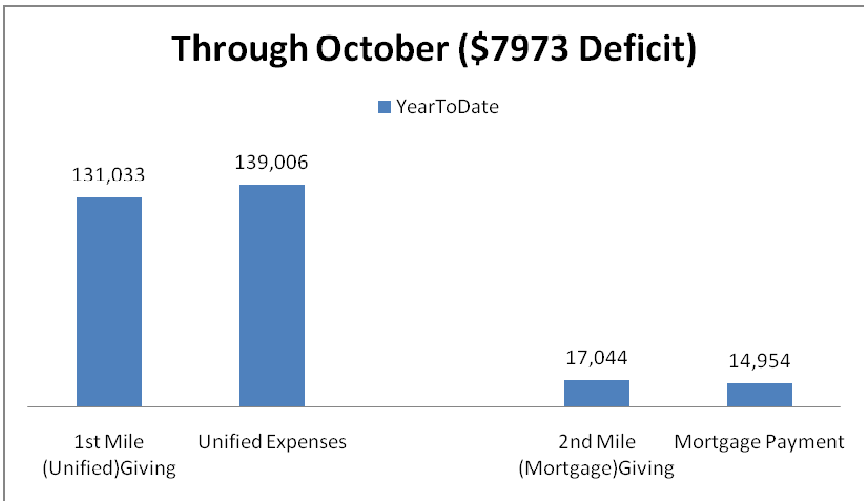
Pastor Rich Moore



Council

Treasurer's Report

"Financial Picture Through October, 2009"



Submitted by Donna Grooms

youth Update

ST. PAUL YOUTH GROUP 7-12 GRADES

**Youth Advisors: Mike Feldpausch, Megan Nyquist, and
Lynne Fortune**

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|--------------|---|
| Sun, Dec 6 | Christmas Bake Sale: 100% of the proceeds go to the Youth Group Fund for activities. |
| January 2010 | Fellowship Event: Lock-in event (details posted at later date). |
| Sat, Feb 6 | Service Event: 9:00-11:00 a.m. Soup Assembly for Souper Bowl Sunday. Meet in Fellowship Hall. |
| Sun, Feb 7 | Service Event: National Souper Bowl Sunday – Table set up in Narthex for sale; Donations to benefit St. Paul Food Pantry and Youth Group. |
| Sun, April 4 | Service Event: Annual Easter Pancake Breakfast; Donations to benefit Youth Group Fund. |
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**Don't like dealing with those pesky
refundable cans and bottles?**



Bring 'em on in.

**We'll take care of them for you!
Proceeds go to the Youth Group Fund**



Although there have been some major changes to the program, we are still participating in the Meijer Community Rewards program. If you use a Meijer credit card, cash or a debit card to make purchases at Meijer, please consider signing up. You can register at 1-800-962-7011. Our code is 606113. Thank you to those of you who already participate.



Youth Group Bake Sale

Sunday, December 6

Proceeds support the activities
of the Youth Group



Christmas Program – December 13th during the 11:00 service. Come watch as the Sunday school students tell us a meaning of the letters in the word C-H-R-S-T-M-A-S. The Congregation will have the opportunity to sing some familiar Christmas carols.

Reminder:

No Sunday School December 20th and 27th.
Sunday School Resumes January 3rd.

**HELP
WANTED**

Sunday School assistant needed for preschool class. No planning needed, just a pair of helping hands. Please contact Bev Johnson or Julie for more info or to volunteer.

Bible Study

In the most recent series of our classes on the Churchwide vote, Fred Hartwig wrote a personal statement and presented it to the class. They appreciated his thought and feeling:

As a human being I believe in God and God has given me the ability to think and make my own decisions about how I live and believe. Each one of us has this ability, right or wrong. As I struggle with my beliefs, and my interpretations of the Bible, and how it guides me through life, I have trouble trying to understand what the authors in the Bible are trying to teach me. At the time each of the books of the Bible was written, the laws and rules during that particular time period, dictated how one should conduct one's life. If we draw conclusions from their time period, using today's thinking, our conclusions differ and we may be missing the true meaning of what our ancestors are trying to tell us. As we move through each century of history, we try to have a better understanding of what was actually written and as we do so we tend to update that original philosophy to the philosophy of what we believe today. Are we bending history, so that we accept what we read in the Bible as acceptable in today's society?

Even though I haven't even begun to understand everything I have studied in the Bible, I, in my own mind, feel that homosexuality is never mentioned in the Bible. The story of Sodom in Genesis is about power and maintaining purity. In the New Testament Paul is basically talking about ethics. Homosexuality is a work that is only a couple of centuries old; it means same (verses opposite (Hetero)).

I believe God has made us what we are. Jesus wants us to love our neighbor as ourselves. I love my wife, my children, my friends--to me it is not sexual, it is truly what God wants me to do. It is not my right to judge God and his plan for another person. I am sure that I will be able to argue that point some day with God, and have a better understanding when that time comes. Right now I do not agree with the ELCA--I feel that I should be able to make my own decisions. I will not allow the ELCA to make me choose between the ELCA and my church family at St. Paul. I am happy at St. Paul and feel that Pastor Moe is the teacher and guide that I need now, as I continue to study and hear God's word.

Fred Hartwig



Social Outreach & Ministry

*Good King Wenceslas looked out on the feast of Stephen
When the snow lay round about deep and crisp and even
Brightly shone the moon that night though the frost was cruel
When a poor man came in sight gath'ring winter fuel*

*"Bring me flesh and bring me wine Bring me pine logs hither
Thou and I will see him dine when we bear him thither."
Page and monarch forth they went forth they went together
Through the rude wind's wild lament And the bitter weather*

*In his master's steps he trod where the snow lay dinted
Heat was in the very sod which the Saint had printed
Therefore, Christian men, be sure wealth or rank possessing
Ye who now will bless the poor shall yourselves find blessing*

We are familiar with the words of the Carol about King Wenceslas, but may not be as familiar with Saint Stephen who is celebrated on December 26.

The apostles had found that they needed helpers to look after the care of the widows and the poor. So they ordained seven deacons, and Stephen is the most famous of these. He served God faithfully and was a sincere shepherd of the resources of the early church. He was in charge of distributing food and other resources to the widows, orphans and other poorer members of the community. *You could say that Stephen ran the first food pantry.* The religious leaders of the time rallied against him and he was stoned to death—the first Christian martyr.

The spirit of the martyred Saint Stephen moved King Wenceslas that cold night not only to provide sustenance to someone who he did not even know but to deliver it himself.

That same Holy Spirit that stayed with Saint Stephen even as he was martyred, inspired King Wenceslas to give of his means to someone in dire need. This same spirit is alive today at St. Paul's and is shown through the service to the community through our Food and Personal Needs Pantry.

As we celebrate the birth of our savior, may we also remember the spirit he sent to Saint Stephen, Wenceslas and to each of us to do his will in service to others.

The pantry committee wishes you a blessed holiday season.

ACTION FOR LSSM

As of Jan 1, 2010, I will no longer be St Paul's LSSM Representative for Action. I will be the Region 10 Coordinator. St. Paul is in region 10.

Look around or look to yourself for the time or ability to help others who need help. I have delegated a lot of my little tasks so things will still get done with just a little leadership. You can pick and choose the ways that you wish to help. I am willing to help you get started in any way that you may need.

In His service,
Betty Velat



IMAGE NEWS

Our IMAGE class currently has three clients who meet on Monday nights from 7-8:30 p.m. With the help of the volunteers, they are working on self-esteem building, barrier identification and resolution, goal setting, decision-making, networking, time management and communication skills. All are taking advantage of the childcare provided.

December 21 we will celebrate Christmas by sharing a meal and gifts. You can help support IMAGE by donating items for our Christmas celebration or by volunteering. You don't need to be available every Monday night.

For more information about IMAGE or to get involved, please contact one of our team members: Julie Anderson, Kelly Anderson, Bev Johnson, or Sandy Miller.

In a "Thank You!" message by Mark S. Hanson, Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, we are reminded that "God's work. Our hands." is the life-giving presence and partnership of the ELCA. It is in this spirit of giving that Prayer Quilts are available. A Prayer Quilt is tangible evidence of our witness to God through prayer for a loved one in need. When we hold the recipient in prayer, we are providing comfort and hope through the power of the Holy Spirit. Please contact Pastor Rich, Julie or me (517.468.2317 or wilsonbw@tds.net) for a quilt for someone who needs the warmth of prayers.

In Christ's Love,
Betty Wilson

December 2009 Monthly Message



Announcing a new recycling option here at St. Paul: your Green Team has placed a plastic bin on the counter in the church kitchen. When you use polystyrene foam cups, plates, etc. here at St. Paul, please rinse them and place them in the bin. They will be taken to Dart Container in Mason for recycling. Marilyn Mook has graciously offered to deliver the foam dishes. Thank you, Marilyn!

To recycle polystyrene foam you may have at home, you can deliver it to Dart Container, 24/7, placing it in the sheds provided there, at 3120 W. Howell Road, Mason. Phone number is 517-676-6892. They do not accept foam packaging peanuts, however...but those can be recycled at Pak Mail, 4150 Hunsaker Drive, Suite D, East Lansing, 517-324-9699.

New feature: Green Kitchen tip of the month

Stock your fridge. A full refrigerator uses less energy than an empty one: Every time you open and close the door, the fridge has to kick in to maintain its temperature. If there's food in there already, there's less outside air introduced, therefore less outside air that needs to be cooled. So if you're the kind of person who just has some milk and a jar of peanut butter in your refrigerator, the California Energy Commission suggests that you take up the extra space with water-filled containers. Just don't stuff it to the gills, or the air inside won't be able to circulate. (A good rule of thumb is to leave an inch or two of space between your food and the walls of the fridge.) And don't ever refrigerate uncovered food: Not only does it make it taste gross, but it also humidifies the air in your fridge and makes the motor work harder. (Source: California Energy Commission)

Submitted by Barb Paff

The Green Team would love to hear from you.
Contact Lindsay Cramer, Marilyn Mook, Inga Opp or Barb Paff.

BWL Hometown Energy SaversSM
COMPACT FLUORESCENT LIGHT RECYCLING SITES

Source: Lansing Board of Water & Light

ACO Hardware
600 Frandor Ave.
Lansing, MI 48912

Gilbert's True Value Hardware
12900 S US HWY 27 Suite 11
Dewitt, MI 48820

ACO Hardware
921 W Holmes Rd. #300
Lansing, MI 48910

Good Deals Computers and
Equipment
1406 W. Saginaw St.
Lansing, MI 48915

Board of Water & Light
Customer Service Center
1232 Haco Dr.
Lansing, MI 48901

Hazen Lumber
2829 S. Martin Luther King Jr.
Blvd.
Lansing, MI 48915

Capitol Lighting
4988 Northwind Dr.
East Lansing, MI 48823

Moosejaw Mountaineering
555 E. Grand Ave.
East Lansing, MI 48823

Carter Lumber
16700 S US Highway 27
Lansing, MI 48906

Office Furniture Outlet
1910 E. Michigan Ave.
Lansing, MI 48912

Darling Builder Supply
1600 Turner St.
Lansing, MI 48906

Pet Supplies Plus
6030 S. Pennsylvania Ave. # 1
Lansing, MI 48911

City of East Lansing
Department of Public Works
Office
1800 E. State St.
East Lansing, MI 48823

Pro-Build
3527 S. Creyts Rd.
Lansing, MI 48917

East Lansing Food Co-op
4960 Northwind Dr.
East Lansing, MI 48823

Scavenger Hunt Eco
317 E. Grand River
Lansing, MI 48906

Everybody Reads
2019 E. Michigan Ave.
Lansing, MI 48912

Standard Electric
773 N. Larch St.
Lansing, MI 48906

Foster Library
200 N. Foster Ave.
Lansing, MI 48912

WF Bohnet
2918 N. Grand River Ave.
Lansing, MI 4890

Thrivent Chili Cookoff & Pumpkin Chunkin Fundraiser

Thank you to all who entered their chili, brought side dishes, set up/cleaned up, brought pumpkins and squash. We raised \$409.00 with a gift from Thrivent of \$270.00 for a grand total of \$679.00 for the furnace fund. Special thanks to our judges: Marilyn Mook, Lynne Fortune and Mark Martin. Chili entries were judged by appearance, aroma, consistency, taste, spiciness/heat, overall creativity and overall acceptability. 1st place was awarded to Barb Paff who won a gift certificate to Bravos, 2nd place to Char Smith with some goodies from Michiganiana - a Michigan oven mitt and special chocolates and 3rd place to Betty Wilson, a gift certificate to Schuler's Bookstore. Afterwards we enjoyed pumpkins and squash soaring through the air from Mark's trebuchet. Thank you Elizabeth Witt for helping Mark load the pumpkins and to all the kids who helped cleaned up and gave back to God by feeding his creatures big and small. Recipes for all of the wonderful chili entries can be found on the shelf in the narthex. Bon Appetit!

The Thrivent Committee: Rick Klingensmith, Lynne Fortune, Cindy Martin

Fellowship

St. Paul Lutheran Church Friday Euchre Night

Euchre night in November was great, we all had fun. We will skip December. We are planning a family game night on January 8th, 2010. Besides euchre, we will have a board game challenge, and a dart challenge. (I will set up a regulation dartboard and I do not think that there is anyone who can beat me!) All ages are welcome.

Fred Hartwig, Dart Professional.

St. Paul Lutheran Church Fourth Friday Friends

*Our December 4th FFF gathering is canceled.

*Our next "FFF" meeting will be Friday, January 22 @ 6:30 pm., in the Fellowship Hall. It will be a Pizza and Catch Phrase Night. We will share the cost of the pizzas. Bring a salad or dessert. Coffee, pop and water will be available. Before the games, we will plan our next 11 months activities, so bring along any suggestions you have. -Terry & Char Smith

DECEMBER READINGS

Sunday, December 6
Second Sunday of Advent
Malachi 3:1–4
Philippians 1:3–11
Luke 3:1–6

Sunday, December 13
Third Sunday of Advent
Zephaniah 3:14–20
Philippians 4:4–7
Luke 3:7–18

Sunday, December 20
Fourth Sunday of Advent
Micah 5:2–5a
Hebrews 10:5–10
Luke 1:39–45 [46–55]

Sunday, December 27
First Sunday of Christmas
1 Samuel 2:18–20, 26
Colossians 3:12–17
Luke 2:41–52



Please join the musicians of St Paul for beautiful music of the Christmas Season on Sunday, December 20 at 10 am. Featuring choir, soloists and instrumentalists, we will lift our voices in praise of the Newborn King!

December Celebrations

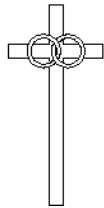
- 02 Gabriel Hausbeck
04 Cindy Frederick
Abby Smith
05 Rene Shireman
07 Sharon Brehmer
08 Marlene Sabrowsky
10 Cheryl Oak
11 Rick Frederick
13 Jacqueline Johnson
Steve Kreuer
Ashton Cruz-Davis
17 Elizabeth Witt
20 Dick Bunge
22 Lorenzo Cruz-Hasubeck
25



- 26 Judy Strieter
30 Bernice Green
31 Pat Reynolds
Larry Howser

Anniversaries

- 10 Chuck Nelson & Susan DeRosa
28 Tom & Pam Stave



Please note: If your birthday or anniversary is NOT listed and it should be, it is because we do not have it on file. If you would like to have your day recognized in the future, please let the office know.

Christmas Tips to Reduce Stress

A 1997 Gallup poll found that 29 percent of Americans found the Christmas holidays more stressful than enjoyable. I doubt these numbers have gone down much in the last ten years, but you do not need to let stress ruin your holidays! By making conscious decisions and setting priorities, you can stay in control this holiday season.



Boss Yourself

At back-to-school night this year, my first-grade daughter's teacher told us parents that she frequently tells a tattling child to "Boss yourself." What this means, she explained, is that the child should make sure she is doing the right thing instead of paying so much attention to what the other children are doing. I loved this saying and have been using it at home with my children as well.

Ummm, so what does this have to do with Christmas stress? Well, the same guidelines can apply for Christmas as well. Don't worry about what other people are getting their kids for Christmas. Don't worry that the neighbors across the street already have their lights up and you can't even remember where yours are. Don't worry that the cookies you are bringing to the cookie exchange are store-bought instead of homemade. You and your family need to decide where you want to spend your time and money this holiday season and don't worry about what anyone else is doing.

Give Yourself the Gift of Time

Christmas was not meant to be packed into a day. The "Twelve Days of Christmas" is more than just a song, after all. Christmas is a season that goes from December 24-January 6. That gives you 12 more days to get your Christmas cards sent out!

You can also give yourself the gift of time by cutting out activities no one really enjoys. Ask everyone in your family to pick one or two Christmas activities they really enjoy, and then focus on getting those activities done. Let everything else go.

Set a Budget and Stick to It

Extra expenses can certainly make you feel stressed out. Don't judge the success of your Christmas by the number of packages under the tree. If you have a large family you buy presents for, suggest some ways to help reduce costs for everyone:

- Buy gifts just for the children
- Draw names so everyone buys a gift for only one person
- Set a limit on the cost of gifts
- Give homemade gifts

When you do go shopping for gifts, shop early in the Christmas season to avoid the last-minute crowds. Also consider shopping online. Many retailers offer free shipping during the holidays.

Cook Up Some Memories

So many memories involve food! Food plays a very important role in Christmas celebrations, from cookies to candies to Christmas dinners. If you enjoy cooking and baking, you'll love this part of Christmas. If you don't...remember our Christmas rule for this year: Boss yourself. Buy goodies, trade with friends, or just decide to be healthy and skip the treats altogether.

Even if you enjoy baking, it can be hard to find time to get it done at Christmas. It's fun to set aside one day and have a marathon baking day with a friend. You enjoy special time together, and at the end of the day, you split all the goodies. Another option is to have a cookie exchange with a group of friends, where everyone brings a treat and you all share the goodies.

What about Christmas dinner? Growing up in my family, Christmas dinner was basically a repeat of Thanksgiving dinner. This meant that as soon as the presents were opened Christmas morning, it was time to head to the kitchen and start cooking. When I wanted to play with my new toys, I was peeling potatoes instead. To get yourself out of the kitchen this year,

- Start a new tradition and change your menu. A crockpot full of soup, tacos, or lasagna can make a great Christmas meal. You don't have to eat turkey or ham.
- If you do want a more traditional meal, make it a potluck and ask people to bring items.
- Order some items from a restaurant or grocery store.

Take Care of Yourself

You know the rules for taking care of yourself – get enough sleep, eat right, exercise, drink plenty of water. It's just following the rules that is tough. The busier you are, though, the more important it is that you take care of yourself. You won't be any good to anyone if you get sick.

Whether or not you regularly write in a journal, try keeping a holiday journal. A journal will help you next year remember what you enjoyed and what you didn't enjoy. You can also use it to reflect on your blessings and your spiritual journey through the Christmas season. By adding to your journal each year, you will create a wonderful keepsake for your family as well as a record to help you make Christmas better each year.

This article is reprinted with permission from the website <http://www.more4kids.info>. Please check it out for more great ideas.

Check out these websites for some suggestions for celebrating Christmas responsibly:

[Give a gift today](#). ELCA Good Gifts make a difference in the world in very tangible ways.



Fair Trade Resources

Check out this collection of information and links to partners like [Lutheran World Relief](#) and the importance of supporting Fair Trade products like coffee, chocolate, and handcrafts. Do you brew Fair Trade coffee in your congregation? If not, start today! (There are many other fair trade gift websites.)

Christian Values Network

Check out www.cvn.org and support your favorite ministries while doing your shopping.



Shop for the holidays – and help LSSM

If you shop online for the holidays, start your trip with a visit to GoodShop and earn money for Lutheran Social Services. Simply enter “Lutheran Social Services of Michigan” and choose your store. Many large retailers participate in this program, and the products do not cost any more when you purchase them through GoodShop.

A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS: *The deadline for the December Newsletter is noon, Wednesday, December 16th.* Submissions should be in written format, preferably electronic. They may be mailed to the church, emailed to officemanager@stpaul-el.org or placed in the office manager's mailbox. Due to time issues, we are unable to accept verbal requests unless there are extenuating circumstances. If you are not sure what information is needed, a form is available in the office. They are located on the wall to the left of the bulletin board. Some editing may be necessary due to space and layout, but if significant changes need to be made, you will be contacted. Thank you in advance for your cooperation. Julie Anderson and Lindsay Cramer.

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