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**Website:**

stpaulsbremen.church  
facebook.com/stpaulsbremen  
vimeo.com/stpaulsbremen

**Church Office Hours:**

M,W,Th, F 8:30 – 11:30 am

**Sunday Schedule:**

Sunday School: 8:30 am  
Worship: 9:30 am  
Worship: 11:15 am (masks  
required)

**Pastor:**

Rev. Neil Wonnacott  
Office Hours:  
M, W, TH & F  
8:30 – 11:30 am  
574-301-9291

As we are now in the Christmas season it is the perfect time to celebrate the birth of our Savior Jesus. It will soon be Epiphany which teaches us about the Gentile Christmas. As you all know I am a Detroit Red Wings fan and I realize that hockey is a global sport. So the day of Epiphany, January 6<sup>th</sup>, is the day that many in the world would call the Christmas for the Gentiles where the Magi came from the East to present to Jesus costly gifts that you would only give to a King.

As we look at Matthew 2:1-12, he shows us a Gospel filled with people who do not belong in the places in which they're found. The Magi who were seeking the King of the Jews did not belong in Jerusalem, bowing before the king of the Jews. King Herod, an Idumean (this is a term employed by Greeks and Romans for the country of Edom (Mk 3:8) did not belong on the throne of David.

Jesus did not belong in the many places where He was often found. We do not belong in the presence of God, but we are cleansed by the blood of Jesus and bid to come into the Father's presence.

As we continue early in the Epiphany season, we see that Jesus is busy calling His disciples at the beginning of His three-year ministry. A theme of Epiphany is the light shining on Jesus, who is revealed as Savior of the world. In the *Gospel* from John, we hear Jesus call Philip to follow Him. Philip in turn finds Nathanael with the Good News that the Messiah promised by

Moses and the prophets has come. Our Messiah is here!!!

**THE DEADLINE FOR THE FEBRUARY EPISTLE IS JANUARY 20TH!!!** Epistle articles, comments, ideas may be deposited in the epistle box in the Narthex mail slots or e-mailed to Bruce Schmidt at bschmidt@fourway.net. I appreciate all of your articles, ideas and comments!

**Men's Group** takes place on Sundays, January 3<sup>rd</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> from 3-5pm for all men ages 15 and above. We will meet in the gym for basketball and fellowship and will close with a prayer.

**Thank You to the members of St. Paul's and their families** for all the love, prayers, gifts and support given to the Pastors, Teachers, and Staff over the past year. May God continue to bless us to work together in His Kingdom, believing that we are "Saved by Jesus to Serve" Ephesians 2:8-10

**A Special Thank You and Praise to God** for all the help and support given to Pastor Wonnacott this past year with all the extra things that God had us do in the community and church. These included the Hope Ministries Dinners, delivering food to our shut-ins, Thanksgiving Dinner, Hope Clothing Drive, peanut butter for Bremen Bags, Cardinal Houses Christmas Party, Bremen Police Department Christmas lunch, and cleaning yards. Also, thank you to those who used their Thrivent Action Team Cards to fund these and other projects. May God bless us to seek and find even more ways to serve together in His Kingdom in 2021!

**Pastor Wonnacott and Family** will be on vacation December 28<sup>th</sup> through January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021

**Parish Fellowship Meeting** after church on January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021

## **Help Needed!**

Extended Care, a part of the educational ministry in our school, has been growing steadily in the last month. It has become necessary to hire additional staff to help in this ministry. There are two shifts available: 11:30 am to 3:00 pm or 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm. If anyone would be interested in working at Extended Care for 1 or 2 days a week please contact Heather Middaugh.

## **Scholarship Granting Organization (SGO) – St. Paul's School Update**

St. Paul's has participated with the Indiana Lutheran SGO over the past 2 years and below is a summary of the success to date:

- To date over \$ 26,000 in donations have been made to the SGO for the benefit of St. Paul's School.
- These donations have fully funded Tuition Aid requests from school families during the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of the 2019-2020 School Year and has fully funded both semesters of the 2020-2021 School Year.
- These funds have supported Tuition needs of dozens of St. Paul's students.

- Current balance in our St. Paul’s SGO account is approximately \$ 2,000 and therefore we are needed to “build up” for the 2021-2022 School Year.
- This program has been very positive for our school and our friends and donors given the 50% Indiana State Income Tax Credit.
- We would ask for your prayerful consideration in your personal giving plans to continue to support this wonderful program.

St. Paul’s School Board

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## **Board Briefs:**

### **Christian Education:**

#### **Sunday School Offerings for the Fall Quarter December 6- February 21**

Pre-K -Grade 2            Nazareth Room

This class will be studying the Old Testament lessons.

The Class will be taught by Linda Tinkey.

Grade 3-5                    Grade 2-3 Classroom

This class will be studying the Old Testament lessons.

Teaching this class will be Joanna Fox.

Grades 6-8                    6-8 Grades Classroom

Our curriculum for this class has been collected by Ken Eichinger and will study the life of Martin Luther

High School                    Principals Office

Jim Tinkey will lead this study for our high school students .

Adult Class                    Bethany Room

Jim Russell will lead the adult class through a study of Hebrews.

The Board of Christian Education Thanks all of the teachers that have given of themselves to teach this last quarter.

### **Postings from Preschool**

We wrapped up 2020 with plenty of activities like pajama day, Christmas relays in the gym, pretend snowball fights, and chapel in the beautiful sanctuary. The children learned about the birth of Jesus, the Good News proclaimed by the angels to the shepherds, and the star that led the wise men to the Savior. We pray God's blessings on all our preschool families in 2021!

## **Book Review: God Walk, Moving at the Speed of Your Soul**

By Joanna Fox

The purpose of the Board of Christian Education is to call God's people into an ever-deepening relationship with Him and with each other through the power of His holy Word. When Moses spoke God's Word to the children of Israel at the end of his earthly life he said, "Take to heart all the words I have solemnly declared to you this day....They are not idle words for you---they are your life." (from Deuteronomy 32:46 and 47)

2020 has proven to be a challenging time in the life of the church. Social distancing as well as illness has made gathering together to study God's Word a particular challenge. To that end, we must discover new ways to connect and to grow through these words that bring life. The Psalms in particular teach us how to pray and how to deal with the full range of human emotion. They can enrich our communication with God and lead to a deeper understanding in following His will as we live, serve, and connect in this world.

Your Board of Christian Education is issuing a challenge to the membership of St. Paul's to read a Psalm every day beginning on January 1, 2021. The book, *Reading the Psalms with Luther*, is being made available (suggested donation \$16) but is not required for participation. You can simply use your personal Bible and beginning on January 1, read Psalm 1. Monthly bookmarks will be distributed following worship services and will be made available in the church office so that you can stay updated if you get a late start or fall a few days behind. Allowing 2 days to read Psalm 119, you will complete your reading of the Psalms on May 31, 2021.

More importantly, allow these words to penetrate your thoughts and your days and look for opportunities to connect with others and share what you have learned. "Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up." (also Moses, Deuteronomy 6:7)

Let's begin!

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## **Book Review: God Walk, Moving at the Speed of Your Soul**

By Jennifer Harman

At what speed do you move throughout the day?

Jesus, as most of His peers, spent countless time walking. Each destination was intentional, divinely planned, and deliberate. Did He hurry, anxious to get to His next destination, or did He enjoy His walk, visiting and teaching His disciples along the way? What is our focus and intention as we scurry through the day? At what speed does God "walk"?

The book "God Walk, Moving at the Speed of Your Soul" by Mark Buchanan addresses these ponderings. Most religions utilize a physical discipline, but Christianity is not known for using one. Buchanan hypothesizes that, as Christians believing the Word became flesh and walked

among us, walking is our spiritual discipline. Our belief calls us to “walk in faith, not just know it or speak it or argue it.” We are, as he puts it, the “Walking Living”. Buchanan’s book is insightful and conversational. It describes the spiritual benefits of walking and what we can learn from God and the Bible through walking. It emphasizes slowing down, being intentional, taking time to hear God and to recognize that His speed may not be our speed. I highly recommend adding “God Walk” to your reading list.

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## **The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod**

### **LCMS Stewardship Ministry**

#### **Newsletter article – January 2021**

It’s a new year. It’s a time when we take stock of the year past in order to improve the year to come. It’s a time when we sit down to plan and implement what we want to accomplish and even change. Part of that is planning our stewardship for the coming year.

Often, we find this difficult and daunting and even joyless, but it doesn’t have to be. In fact, it is really quite simple and full of joy. So, here are some tips to make that planning less stressful. You begin by answering these three questions:

- Who are you?
- To whom do I give?
- And how much?

So, who are you? The Table of Duties in the *Luther’s Small Catechism* informs us. Are you a hearer of God’s Word? Are you a citizen of society? Are you a member of a family? Stewardship covers these three estates: church, society, and family. We don’t particularly struggle to give to society or family. Our struggles, our difficulties, and our questions arise in giving to the Church.

So, what is our duty as members of the Church with regard to giving? Again, the Table of Duties gives us a guide. If you are a hearer – a member of the Church who receives instruction – St. Paul taught: “Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches” (Gal. 6:6). This means the local congregation is primary.

Your pastor is the one called to preach the Gospel to you and administer the Lord’s blessed sacraments to you. Your congregation is the place where those things happen. Thus, when God calls us to give to the Church, He has the local congregation in mind. For “the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel” (1 Cor. 9:14).

How much do we give to the local congregation? Our only instructions are to give:

- Regularly (1 Cor. 6:1–2);

- Proportionally (1 Cor. 16:1–2; 2 Cor. 8:12);
- Generously (2 Cor. 8:20);
- Of our first fruits (Gen. 4:4; Prov. 3:9; Lev. 27:30); and
- With a spirit of eagerness (2 Cor. 9:2), earnestness (2 Cor. 8:7), cheerfulness (2 Cor. 9:7), and love (2 Cor. 8:23).

In other words, giving to the Church is not to be an afterthought, given after everything else is spent. In this way, it is deliberate. We give regularly – weekly, biweekly, monthly, quarterly, or yearly – keeping in mind our own strengths, weaknesses, and limitations. We set it aside beforehand – before anything else is spent.

From those first fruits, we set aside a proportionate and generous amount. Ten percent was the standard for the Israelites. This was a command for the ancient Israelites. We can give as much as we want, but ask yourself: Do we really want to be less generous than was commanded of the Israelites? Is the job of the New Testament Church bigger or smaller than the job given to Israel?

And how are we to give it? We give it with eagerness and earnestness. We give it cheerfully and with love, not out of compulsion. For through the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments, God has made us His children, forgiven us all our sins, given us grace upon grace, promised us life everlasting with Him in His kingdom, and filled us with His own Spirit, the Holy Spirit. This makes giving a joy, as Jesus said, “it is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35).

It’s that easy. And it is joyful. For in stewardship, our gracious and giving Lord invites us to take part in the work that He accomplishes here on earth, providing for the ongoing preaching of the Gospel as well as those who are in need. Taking part in that makes all our work holy – work that is done in service to the Lord as priestly members of His kingdom.

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## **Complete Restoration of Old St. Paul’s Church Continues into 2021**

The restoration of the old church at 214 East South Street continues under the direction of project manager Matthew VanSoest. The building is owned by non-profit Historic Bremen Inc. and is being operated and maintained by a volunteer base from the non-profit Bremen Community Cares Main Street. 2020 projects included a complete renovation of the large parlor room in the basement – now officially known as the Henry Kiefer Family Event Room. The building is retrofitted with new mechanical and electrical systems, energy efficient windows, and modern yet historic appropriate materials and finishes. The entire 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the school building (former school auditorium and later subdivided into Sunday School rooms) was recently renovated and now houses two local artists in two studio spaces. The school lobby, pastor’s study, and stairwell systems were completed around Christmas time. New handicap accessible restrooms, a chair lift, and concrete entrance ramp are being planned to make the building ADA compliant in early 2021. The first phase of the steeple restoration is being performed by a local roofing contractor

and the entire front façade will begin to be restored to its original 1875 beauty! Most of the work is being performed by volunteers – including Bremen High School students!

“What’s most exciting about the restoration process is finding hidden treasures of the past along the way! Old bulletins from the 1950’s, member’s names carved in woodwork, old banners, photographs, and more have been collected, documented, and will be placed on display. A big thank you to St. Paul’s for not moving out in totality – its been a joy to discover the unexpected – a nice break from the sweat and grime during the process,” stated Matthew VanSoest. If anyone one is interested in volunteering during the 2021 restoration process, contact Matthew VanSoest at 574-971-6734.

The building is officially called the Bremen Community and Performing Arts Center and is called home to local artists, dance and exercise groups, and a Hispanic congregation. Their partnership along with renting out the large parlor room for community events generates revenue for month to month operations.

Stay tuned for upcoming ribbon cutting information and the naming of spaces after certain St. Paul’s families.

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## **January’s Devotion**

John 2:1-5 - On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus also was invited to the wedding with His disciples. When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever He tells you."

I love the story of Jesus at the wedding in Cana. Mary mentions the wine problem to Jesus—why, exactly? Up to this point He has done no miracles (see John 2:11), so she's probably not expecting one. Did Jesus have a reputation for fixing difficult problems? She clearly has a lot of faith in Him.

Jesus reacts to His mother's hint with bemusement: "What does this have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come."

That last sentence is a little cryptic, but it certainly carries a sense of "No." I'm sure Mary heard it, too. Nevertheless, she knows her Son well. So instead of arguing or instead of giving up, she merely turns to the servants and says, "Do whatever He tells you." And off she goes, leaving the problem in Jesus' hands.

That was a wise choice! Because just as Mary foresaw, Jesus gets to work on the problem—if not exactly the way that she imagined it. He does His first miracle. And He doesn't do it on His

own, for example, by causing the wineskins to magically refill themselves. No, Jesus has a better idea.

He makes the servants a part of His miracle. "Fill the jars with water," He says, and they do so, up to the brim. They don't know why, of course. He said to do it, and that's good enough for them. Then He tells them to dip some out and take it to the master of the feast to drink. Now that must have been a bit scarier. What is the emcee going to do when he's faced with a wineglass full of washing water?

But they do it, and everything turns out fine, in fact, better than fine. The water was the best wine. The servants breathe a sigh of relief, Mary no doubt smiled, and the wedding feast was saved.

It's a pretty good paradigm for what we ought to do when we run into problems in our own lives, isn't it? Like Mary, we take our needs to Jesus—even the odd ones, even the ones that don't appear to have any spiritual dimension to them at all. We may have no idea how to fix the problem; we don't even know what to pray for. It doesn't matter. We can leave it in Jesus' hands, knowing that He will do whatever is best. He always has before!

But there's more: because very often Jesus involves us in the solution to those messes, just as He involved the servants at Cana. "Do such-and-such," He says to us, and we go off to do it—whether that means lending someone money, making phone calls on their behalf, listening for hours to a troubled person, or any other loving action. We obey Him. We trust Him to work things out. After all, the One who died and rose again to save us will certainly care about the smaller problems in our lives!

THE PRAYER: Lord, when there is trouble in my life, please help me. Amen.

This Devotion was used from Lutheran Hour Ministries and written by Dr. Kari Vo.



# Birthdays & Anniversaries

January 2021

## ANNIVERSARIES

- |   |                      |    |                       |
|---|----------------------|----|-----------------------|
| 1 | Hank & Gloria Kiefer | 31 | Joshua & Deana Miller |
| 8 | Doug & Rhonda Owens  |    |                       |

## BIRTHDAYS

- |    |   |    |   |
|----|---|----|---|
| 6  | Eric Foster<br>Rebecca Mejia<br>Erin Sarber     | 21 | Carly Dietl<br>Kyle Hinds                       |
| 7  | Jaylyn Dobbins                                  | 22 | Thomas Harman<br>Giovanni Mejia                 |
| 9  | Brody Beasley<br>Goldie Buckner<br>Sandy Kiefer | 23 | Keith Miller                                    |
| 10 | Terri Bickel<br>Keith Russell<br>Beth Schmitt   | 24 | Aiden Eby<br>Cody Miller<br>Elliott VanSoest    |
| 11 | Jerry Smith                                     | 25 | Carter Miller<br>Candy Perkins<br>Jason Russell |
| 12 | Janet Miller                                    | 26 | Jared Nielsen                                   |
| 14 | James Mitchell                                  | 27 | Carole Sahlhoff                                 |
| 15 | Sharon Latzke                                   | 30 | Conner Perkins<br>Dorothy Walter                |
| 16 | Marian Yoder<br>Melody Farnsworth               | 31 | Angela Hughes                                   |
| 17 | Kayli Ann Miller<br>Phyllis Sahlhoff            |    |   |
| 18 | Brittney Pittman<br>Tony Venable                |    |   |
| 19 | Keegan Robins<br>Lilly Rogers                   |    |   |



