



The Spirit of St. Paul's

www.stpaulslutheran.ca

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN

COMING UP



*Enjoy some Christmas
fellowship
hot apple cider
potluck lunch
carols singing
following worship
on December 9*

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
627 Taylor Street East
Pastor Murray Keith
306-343-9535
www.stpaulslutheran.ca

Everyone Welcome
Advent and Christmas Services
Advent Services: Wednesday 7:00 p.m.
Dec 5th, Dec 12th and Dec 19th
Children's Christmas Program and Divine Service
December 23rd 10:00 a.m.
Christmas Eve – Candle light Service
December 24th 7:00 p.m.
Christmas Day Divine Worship with Holy Communion
December 25th 10:00 a.m.

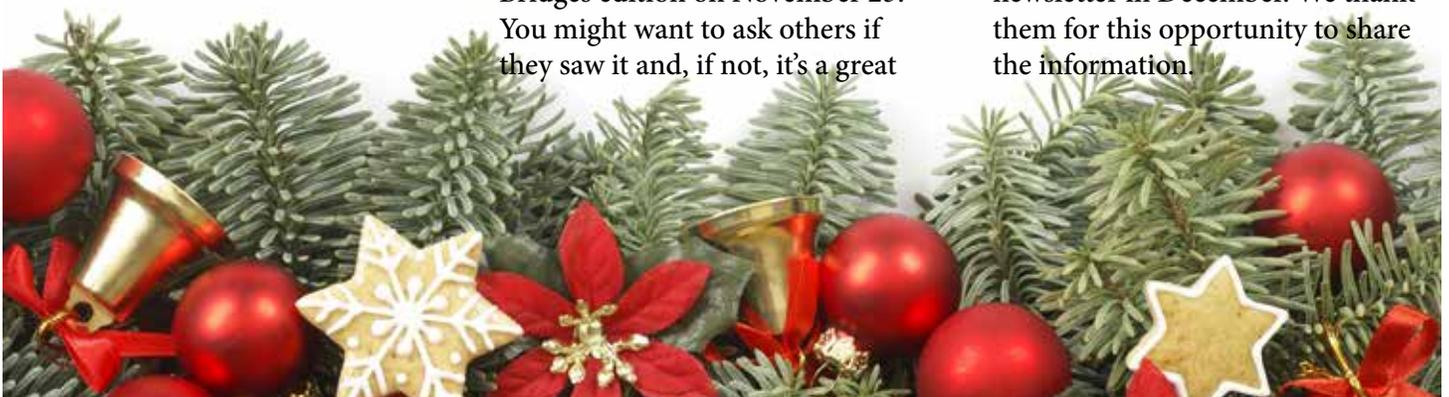
**For unto us is born this day in the city of David a Saviour,
who is Christ the Lord**
Luke 2:11

Sunday Worship Services 10:00 a.m.
Lutheran Church Canada Church of the Lutheran Hour

The Board of Evangelism/PR will not be offering Carolfest for 2018 but we encourage you to invite your friends, neighbours and family to St Paul's Advent and Christmas Services. The ad above was published in the Star Phoenix Bridges edition on November 23. You might want to ask others if they saw it and, if not, it's a great

opportunity to tell them what's in it and invite them to join you for any or all of the events.

If you live in the Queen Elizabeth/Exhibition/Haultain community, there will be an ad in their Community Association newsletter in December. We thank them for this opportunity to share the information.



Reminders

- Please remember that, because we have a number of members with allergies to nuts, any foods brought to church events should be nut-free.
- Also, several have allergies to fragrances. Please consider them when choosing toiletries and whether or not to wear perfumes.
- LWMLC mites and offerings are collected the first Sunday of each month.

Caring Ministry Coordinator
for December - Angela Neufeld

Remember to check out the great resources in our library—books, videos and more for all ages.



Circuit women gathered for R & R at St. Paul's



On October 27 women from the Saskatoon Circuit (Nor'Western Zone of LWMLC) gathered at St. Paul's for a day of R & R. Main focus of the day was a prayer service titled, "Lord, be our R & R (Rock & Refuge).

Thinking of R & R led the planners to think about camping, hence the tent & "fire" decorations to set the theme. One often sees rocks lying around when camping and that tied in with the rock idea in the day's theme so everyone got to paint a rock, turning it into a special reminder that Jesus is our Rock and Refuge.

Also, in keeping with the camping idea, lunch was chili with s'mores for dessert.

Pat Kauk of Holy Cross, zone delegate to the national LWMLC convention in July, reported on



decisions made, speakers heard and servant events participated in. District president, Arlene Kish provided an update regarding the district convention to be held this coming June in Yorkton, Sask.

Pastor: Rev. Murray Keith
Office Secretary: Sandy Harper
phone: 306-343-9535
e-mail: stpaulslcc@sasktel.net
web: www.stpaulslutheran.ca
Facebook: www.facebook.com/stpaulslutheran
Instagram: www.instagram.com/stpaulslcc
Spirit Editor: Marion Hollinger
hollinger@sasktel.net

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Donna Smith was formally received into membership at St. Paul's on October 23. Welcome to our church family Donna!

Stewardship

Giving thanks is what Christians do

Throughout his epistles and his preaching recorded in the Book of Acts, St. Paul refers, in one way or another, to thanksgiving and thankfulness nearly 50 times. Whether vertically toward God, or horizontally toward the neighbour, thanksgiving is a major theme within St. Paul's body of work.

What does this mean? It means thankfulness is intrinsic to the life of those baptized into Christ. In other words, giving thanks is what Christians do as they live out their lives in this world.

The problem is that we often forget this. Consider your average, run-of-the-mill, normal day. When you get home, and your parents, your spouse or your children ask about your day, what first comes to your mind? After 99 percent of things went right, went exactly as planned, were enjoyable and blessings, we tend to focus on and remember the one percent of things that went poorly, that didn't go as planned, and that were nuisances.

We remember the bad things. We focus on discontent. And we fail to give thanks in all circumstances for everything (Eph. 5:20) and to rejoice in the Lord always (Phil. 4:4).

Classifieds

Something to sell or give away? Need something? Services to offer to fellow members? Try The Spirit Classifieds first. No cost. Leave your ads at the church office or give them to the editor.

Thankfulness and contentment go together. We are content with things for which we are thankful. St. Paul could be content with having plenty or when in need because He gave thanks to the Lord for all things. He thanked the Lord for those who had prayed for him and listened to his proclamation of the Gospel. He gave thanks for their good works in and for the Church of Christ. He gave thanks for the grace of God in Christ Jesus and found that God's grace was sufficient for him.

So, give thanks for all things and in all circumstances. For you have been saved from sin, death, and hell by the death and resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ. You have been added to the very family of God in an adoption of grace through Holy Baptism. God is your Father. Our Lord, Jesus Christ is your brother.

But He not only provides for your spiritual well-being, He cares also for this body and life. Your Father in heaven provides food and clothes, house and home, husband, wife, and children. He gives you reason and all your senses. He has given you the raw talents that you have developed into careers. Everything you are and everything that you have is a gift from His fatherly divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in you.

Give thanks for these things. Make a list—every morning if you must. Say them out loud. Sing about them within the congregation of the saints. And remember this: God has given you these things so you may be of service to those around you—your family, your neighbors, your brothers and sisters in Christ. For to whom much is given; much shall be required (Luke 12:48).

Voters approve more money for missions

At the November meeting of the voters the Board of Stewardship reported that at the end of September we had an excess of revenue over disbursements of just over \$17,000. Thanks be to God—we have much to be thankful for!

Based on this and prior years' giving and spending history for the October to December period, the board is estimating a year-end surplus in the range of \$25,000. With this result a possibility, while also recognizing we have an accumulated deficit on our books of just over \$10,000 to cover with it, the voters decided to make an additional contribution to our 2018 mission commitment of \$5,000. We give thanks to God for the generous attitude He has given to our members. We hope and pray that this thankful attitude will continue through the rest of the year and into 2019.

*With thanks and gratitude.
Board of Stewardship*

Pastor's Corner

Annual reminder—a broken record or badly needed?

I spent quite a bit of time staring at my computer screen watching the cursor flash repeatedly on a blank page trying to figure out what to write for this December issue of *The Spirit*. I think part of the problem is that I feel inclined to again provide encouragement to not get distracted from what is truly important this Christmas season, to stay focused on the Word becoming flesh to dwell with us to save the world. But I fear I will sound like a broken record. I bring this up every year. However, I realized after staring at the cursor flashing for a bit longer that this is something I need to be reminded of every year. And you likely do, too.

There are so many things going on this time of year. Decorating. Baking. Cooking. Gifts. Parties. Hosting company. Travel. I'm sure you can add many more to the list. These are wonderful things that make everything special and help us to celebrate "this most wonderful time of the year." But it's easy to end up celebrating and focusing on all of this, while forgetting why we are having a celebration in the first place. We can become overwhelmed by all of the demands and, instead of enjoying these special things, we end up just going through the motions and eagerly waiting for it all to be over. We can find ourselves feeling disappointed—all of the anticipation and effort—and before we know it the presents have been unwrapped, the food has been consumed, our family and friends have returned home. You have heard all of this before. I have, too. But it's good to hear it again.

We need to be reminded not to

focus on earthly things, because they are fleeting. The prophet Isaiah tells us the earth will wear out like a garment and we who dwell in it will die in like manner. Jesus tells us that heaven and earth will pass away. So, no matter what, we will ultimately find ourselves unfulfilled with earthly things, because they are only temporary.

But God's Word is eternal; it does not pass away. When we focus on the truth that the eternal Word became flesh by being born of a Virgin to save us—that is a peace and comfort that is lasting. In fact, it is a peace and comfort that is eternal. So, at the risk of sounding like a broken record, focus on God this season—focus on the love He has shown and given to you through His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Enjoy the good things that help us celebrate Christmas, and let His peace bring you comfort during the busy-ness of this season, into the new year, and through all your days.

*Lord Jesus Christ, You deigned
to dwell*

*Among us here on earth
As God with us, Emmanuel,
To bring this holy birth.*

*Though rich, You willingly became
One with our poverty,
That we might share Your wealth and
name*

*For all eternity!
(LSB #362, v. 4).*

*God's blessings,
Pastor Keith*

*Come away from the hustle and
bustle to the peace of Advent
worship December 5, 12 and 19
at 7:00 p.m.*

AN HOUR OF PRAYER

from Today's Light, Oct.-Dec. 2010

You may want to devote a full 60 minutes to the following prayer outline. On the other hand, perhaps you may have a smaller amount of time available. In any case, many believers down through the centuries have received the Lord's blessing upon meditation of His Word. In addition, since God's Word reveals His will, contemplation of His Word can guide our prayers in powerful, God-pleasing ways.

Enter His Gates

Begin by praising God for His grace and deliverance. Use the words of Psalm 39:4-8.

Show me, O Lord, my life's end
and the number of my days;
let me know how fleeting is
my life.

You have made my days a mere
handbreadth;
the span of my years is as
nothing before You.

Each man's life is but a breath.

Selah

Man is a mere phantom as he goes
to and fro:
He bustles about, but only in vain;
he heaps up wealth, not knowing
who will get it.

But now, Lord, what do I look for?

My hope is in You.

Save me from all my transgressions;
do not make me the scorn of fools.

- Reflect on your life and on how your Saviour-God has cared for and blessed you. What are you especially thankful for today as you reflect upon God's protection and deliverance in your life?

- What special requests are on your heart and mind as you approach God's throne of grace?

Education

Sunday school prepares for Christmas

Some of our younger congregational members will be presenting the Christmas program “Silent Night, Holy Night” during Divine Service on December 23. Please join us as they share the joyful story of Christmas through word and song using imagery from the Silent Night hymn. A special thanks to the youth for lending a helping hand.

The children received Advent calendars to help them prepare for Christmas with their families. Please let Denise Timm or Sandy Harper (church secretary) know if your child(ren) did not receive one and would like to do so.

Library happenings

A new assortment of books is being ordered from Concordia Publishing House for the library. They will be available in the new year.



LET US PRAY

...for the \$15,000 grant being provided during this triennium by LWML–Canada mites for mission and ministry projects at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Moncton, N.B.

Good Shepherd Lutheran, Moncton, N.B., a small mission congregation in Atlantic Canada, identified one of their greatest needs as having their pastor freed up to provide evangelism training, prospect and member visitation and instruction and leadership in local and regional mission projects. Their pastor is presently serving them Sundays and one evening per

week for catechism instruction while working at an outside job teaching English and French as a second language. He will be able to take additional time away from his teaching as this grant will cover any loss of pay.

Father in heaven, we thank you that the funds provided by this mission grant will allow the pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Moncton, N.B., (who works outside the parish) time to provide evangelism training, prospect and new member visitations, and leadership



in local and regional mission projects. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

One chapter ends—another begins!

For many years, FaithLife Financial has blessed our congregation with annual \$100 fellowship grants as well as numerous matching grants (ranging from \$300 to \$500) in support of both charitable and capital fund-raising projects. Recently, FaithLife announced that congregational FaithLife Chapters and the grant

programs are being discontinued, in favour of an exciting new initiative.

Beginning January 2019, ANY adult (age 16+) FaithLife Financial member (having investment or insurance with FaithLife Financial), may volunteer to lead an Action Team (comprised of family, friends, or like-minded individuals) and apply for \$150 seed money and

promotional materials to initiate either a fund-raiser or service project that is “near and dear to your heart” in the community.

For now, as you gather with family and friends over the holidays, dream of the possibilities. Then, watch for more detailed information in the New Year.

*Verla Schmirler
(On behalf of FaithLife Chapter 2195)*

Our very own emergency relief, development assistance and refugee re-settlement agency

When I began this “column” to help us get to know each other in ways we might not as we meet and greet on Sunday mornings, I wasn’t going to write about something from my own life. But, as our LWML society began planning the “Be a Valentine to the World” project, I realized sharing my experiences with Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR) might be of interest.

One sunny summer afternoon several years ago our phone rang and the person calling said I had been suggested as an appointee to the board of directors of CLWR. It took me completely by surprise. Having worked as secretary to Pastor Guebert, who some years earlier had served on the board, in fact he had been its president, I had some idea of expectations. But I had never been an active volunteer in this type of work so wondered if I was a good candidate. Regardless, I decided I could learn much so I said yes. And learn I did.

CLWR is incorporated as a separate, charitable organization with the members of its board appointed by the two Lutheran synods it serves—Lutheran Church—Canada (LCC) and Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC). In other words, it’s “ours.” The leaders of the two synods serve as advisors to the board which sets policy and hires an executive director. That executive director then is responsible for staffing, carrying out the expectations of the board and reporting to it.

I knew CLWR was begun by George Keil, a member of an LCMS (forerunner of LCC) congregation in Winnipeg, and its main task at the beginning was to help re-settle the many refugees streaming into



Cody Cleave demonstrates the baling machine.

Canada at the end of World War II.

At one board meeting there was a lengthy discussion about changing the organization’s name to better reflect the work being done. To be sure, much relief work in emergency situations was and is carried out (often on behalf of the Canadian government) but development work around the world and re-settling refugees in Canada plays a greater role. In the end it was decided more would be lost than gained by changing from a name with which donors had familiarity.

Something surprised me, as it does many others when they have opportunity to visit the “warehouse” in Winnipeg. It’s so small. At that time, it was simply a very large room in the basement of a relatively modest building with CLWR offices on the main floor. They have since moved but space hasn’t really increased. With hundreds of quilts and kits and boxes of soap and other things constantly arriving you’d think they would need lots of room and a large staff just to handle that part of what the organization does. Not so. The staff was one person (and now he has an assistant)... helped by many volunteers. Most

things go into a press and are compressed into tightly packed rectangular bales. From there they go into the shipping container being prepared for going overseas, one where every inch costs so blocks that fit tightly together matter.

Speaking of staff...I was amazed that only a handful of people accomplish so much every year. They are multiplied many times over by the partnerships CLWR has with other organizations in many parts of the world but CLWR-paid staff numbers are small. The administration costs of CLWR are amazingly low, perhaps a quarter to a third of what is spent by a group like World Vision. When you or I donate to CLWR almost all of it goes to help those who need it. And because of CLWR’s excellent reputation, the Canadian government matches many of those donations so money goes even further.

Several years later I was invited to participate in a discussion regarding improvements to the program regarding donations of kits of various kinds. The result was establishing the We Care program, paying a fair price to workers in a developing nation to make and stencil the bags and providing a means to promote the gathering of such kits through the congregations of LCC and ELCIC. And better yet, the We Care bags serve an added purpose as a bag or back pack for the recipient to store and carry the items we have packed and sent with so much love and care.

I believe I gained much more than I gave as a member of the board. It was an eye-opening experience. We can all be proud of what we accomplish together through CLWR.

Marion Hollinger

Serving others

True, it isn't Valentine's Day any time soon but Christmas seems like a great time to get ready if we want to do something significant for someone who lacks what we have in abundance.

Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR) has a special program called "We Care" where items are gathered for various kinds of "kits" and placed into a "We Care" bag to be sent overseas. Some kits are for children, some for adults.

Between now and Valentines Day individuals, groups of two or three individuals and families are invited to pick up the list for one of the kits and put together the items requested.

Next week sample kits will be on display and lists of contents

*Be a Valentine
to the world!*

Fill a We Care bag for
Canadian Lutheran
World Relief (CLWR)



provided. You will be invited to fill out and turn in a card (in your mailbox next week) so we know how many kits will be made. CLWR usually asks for a donation to cover the cost of shipping the kits overseas but St. Paul's LWML will order the bags needed and cover that cost. You need only put together a kit with



love and care. They will be collected and sent on your behalf.

23 layettes were provided to the maternity ward at Royal University Hospital this fall on behalf of the congregation. Contact Gail Mitchell if you want to help with the next batch.

Serving at Friendship Inn



Want to help? Contact Dianne Gilbert at 306-343-0219 or sign up next time the dates are posted on the bulletin board.



Share the love – keep children warm

The annual mitten "tree" is ready for your contributions. If you've been gathering or knitting mittens, toques and scarves all year long, now is the time to bring them. Or maybe you've purchased some. The tree will be up until December 30 for your donations. These warm goodies will be delivered to the YWCA in January. This agency both gives them to children who don't have any and distributes them to many other helping agencies in the city. Thanks to St. Paul's LWML for providing this serving opportunity.

Evangelism

God's help in times of need

"In my distress I called upon the Lord: to my God I cried for help. From His temple He heard my voice and my cry to Him reached His ears" (Psalm 18:6).

"I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth" (Psalm 121:1).

How does God help us?

- **Through the reading and hearing of His Word.**
- **Through the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion.**
- **Through Christian resources.**
- **Through people.**

Let's look at some resources God has provided to us

Through Lutheran Hour Ministries we are blessed to have the Project Connect (PC) booklets written from a Christian perspective on a variety of topics of situations life sometimes throws our way.

1) What is Christmas?: (LHM) "For families Christmas can be a trying time but God's gift of love can heal every wound."

This Project Connect booklet by Rev. Wayne Palmer brings into focus that Christmas isn't always bright and cheery for those struggling through unemployment, alienation, family conflict, terminal illness. This can be a difficult and complicated time of year. Many may long to recapture the wonder of Christmas they remembered as a child, but has long since faded away. Many struggle to make everything perfect and find it all too much and lose the joy in busyness.

This booklet through Scriptural narrative from the first Christmas conveys how God has reconciled man through His Son and how His love gives us hope when

re-establishing connections with family. The best part about Christmas is sharing God's gift of His Son; it's about forgiveness, peace, joy and hope that His life, death and resurrection brings for this life and the next, a gift that is impossible to put a price on.

2) The Christmas Journey: (LHM) "This Christmas children story book is about God's expedition to earth as the Babe of Bethlehem. Enjoy this booklet as it rhymes its way through the Nativity story of Jesus' birth."

3) Live The Six: (LHM) Learn how to be an everyday missionary, inviting God into the life you're already living."

This Project Connect booklet written by Rev. Dion Garrett, gives practical, informative and helpful strategies on how to live our lives in service to God as His ambassadors, His representatives, His priests to the people we meet every day—our neighbours, our family or maybe even someone at our church. Live the Six can transform the way we think into a lifestyle and not a list of things to do. It is about living your Christian faith beyond the hour at Sunday service by encouraging you to "Live the Six": "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God has prepared in advance for us to do" (Ephesians 2:10).

The booklets are free to take for personal use or to share with others. Our thanks to Delia Stevenson, who serves on the Board of Education and manages the rack.

*May you find peace, hope and comfort in His Word,
The Board of Evangelism*

God's promises in times of need

Every word of God proves true; He is "a shield to those who take refuge in Him" (Proverbs 30:5).

"...and call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me" (Psalm 50:15).

