

The Spirit of St. Paul's

SEPTEMBER 2017

www.stpaulslutheran.ca

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN

Forty-three years later – a familiar scene

1974



2017



On Tuesday August 8, 2017, there was a heavy thunderstorm that left us wondering if Noah and his companions were going to float by on the Ark!

Rainstorms like this have caused flooding in the past – see the photo above of the 1974 flood. It took many hands all night to keep the water at bay that time. It was fortunate people were in the building. The neighbouring church to the north had their basement completely filled. We hope it didn't happen to them again.

This time we are fortunate that there was paving work done recently at the back of the church to divert the water away from the building and everything remained dry. Thank you to our Board of Church Properties!



Help Wanted!

Interested in helping out with the St. Paul's youth group? Please contact Nichelle by phone (306) 281-5587 or email: nichellestever@gmail.com.

Attention youth and parents

There will be a meeting following the church service on September 17 to discuss the 2017/2018 youth year. Please bring your suggestions and concerns.

Classifieds

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

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.



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Lego — that all-time favourite — takes on a Lutheran look

As part of our celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, the Saskatoon Circuit is hosting a Lego-building event at St. Paul's. We have arranged to borrow a kit to build Luther's Rose—it has 7,000 pieces of Lego, so we'll need your help!

The fun begins at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 9, 2017. All are welcome, whether you're a Lego-building whiz or whether your usual interaction with Lego is stepping on the pieces your kids leave on the floor! We hope to see you there.

Out on the links this summer



On a few more inches and it would have been a hole in one. Great tee shot, Ken!

Learning opportunities – Important dates for your calendar

• **Sunday school** will begin on **September 17** at 11:20 am.

During the first four to five weeks of Sunday school, the children will be learning about the good news of the Gospel while being introduced to Martin Luther's life, teachings and his influence on the church, using a flannelboard format. Parents and/or other family members are encouraged to attend with their children to review this important story of our Lutheran heritage as we celebrate 500 years since the Reformation. Following that, the children will be studying CPH's

New Testament material, "Jesus Shows He Is True God."

Last year, the children worked on memorizing the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed. This year, memorizing Luther's Morning and Evening Prayers and the books of the Bible will be added.

Please let Denise Timm know by August 23 if your child(ren) plans to attend this year, so the appropriate amount of material may be ordered. Thank you. heavenlyhills@sasktel.net or 1-306-497-2285

• **Bible study start-up dates and topics:**

Sunday Morning with Marion Hollinger – TBA, possibly in October; continuing to study "God's Word for Today: Luke."

Ladies Tuesday Morning with Pastor Keith – Begins Tuesday, September 5 at 10 am; studying upcoming Sunday lesson readings. The ladies like to think they influence pastor's sermons... only Pastor Keith knows for sure. The first Tuesday of every month is allotted for an LWML meeting which includes a study from *Tapestry* magazine.

Tuesday Afternoon – TBA

Men's Network Breakfast (at Grainfield's Restaurant on 8th St) with Pastor Keith – Thursday at 7 a.m.; now studying videos in Swedish with English subtitles? Sounds interesting!

Thursday Evening – changed to Wednesday evenings for October 11 (Grace), 18 (St. Paul's) and 25 (Holy Cross) at 7:30 pm; continuing the Saskatoon Circuit Reformation study, "A Man Named Martin."

• The next **Book of Concord** discussion meeting TBA.

*In His Service,
Denise Timm, Board Chair*

Reformation 500 Commemoration Banquet



Western Development Museum

2610 Lorne Ave.

on

Saturday Oct. 28. 2017

6 p.m.

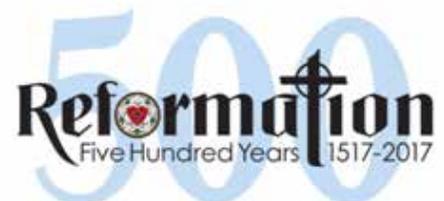
Guest Speaker: Donna Pyle

Lutheran Author

Tickets \$35

Available at the Church office

or from Rhonda Billard (306 244-4743 or billardr@sasktel.net)



Pastor's Corner

It is a common misconception that Martin Luther and the Lutheran Reformers started a new church in the sixteenth century. Nothing could be further from the truth. Luther's goal was never to be innovative or to create something new. Instead, he wanted to remove the false teachings that had crept into the Church and accumulated over the centuries and return to the pure doctrine of Christ and the Apostles. To achieve this, Luther and the Reformers went to Scripture itself and to the writings of the early church fathers. There, they rediscovered the true and saving doctrine and worked tirelessly to reform the Church so that it could continue as the one catholic Church (meaning universal, not Roman Catholic).

This is evidenced by the fact that all of the confessional documents in the Book of Concord (except the Small Catechism) contain references and quotes from the early church fathers. Mentioned in the Book of Concord are Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, Athanasius, John Chrysostom, Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine, and many more. The work of these early church fathers covered the span between the second century and the eighth, and the Reformers relied on them to show that what they were teaching was nothing new, but was in line with the historic creeds and the teachers of the catholic faith.

For example, the main doctrine at the heart of the Reformation was justification (i.e., how we are reconciled to God) and the Reformers relied heavily on Scripture to support the truth that we are justified by God's grace, through faith, in Christ. However, they also quoted the early church fathers to emphasize that this was not a novel teaching. St. Ambrose, who was Archbishop of Milan in the fourth century, is quoted in the

Book of Concord saying, "Let no one boast about works, because no one is justified by his deeds. But he who is righteous has righteousness given to him because he was justified from the washing of Baptism. Faith, therefore, is that which frees through the blood of Christ" (Apology IV:103).

To be sure, quoting the early church fathers doesn't mean that the Reformers regarded them as infallible or as authoritative as the Bible. We believe that the Scriptures are "the only true standard or norm by which all teachers and doctrines are to be judged" (Formula, Solid Declaration, Summary, 3). However, we recognize that the "lens" through which we view

the Bible and its teachings is the faith that has been handed down to us by the generations of saints who have gone before us who have held fast to God's Word.

As we celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation next month, we remember that we are not celebrating the beginning of a new church. We are celebrating the Reformation, the restoration, of the Good News that we are saved by God's grace, through faith, in Christ. This is the catholic faith we confess. This is the catholic Church to which we belong.

*God's blessings,
Pastor Keith*

Pray for God's blessing in Kitchener, Ontario

Food, clothing and outreach program, Community Cupboard, Kitchener, Ontario – \$21,000

The Community Cupboard program of Historic St. Paul's, Kitchener, Ontario, feeds the hungry of the greater Kitchener-Waterloo area with perishable and non-perishable food and offers free warm clothing. The program has been blessed to lead many into the worship life of the church. It now serves an average of 275 guests each Monday from November to April and depends upon the generosity of church members and the congregations of the Kitchener Circuit. This grant from LWML-Canada through the giving of mites, will assist in helping the program continue. Please join members of St. Paul's LWMLC as we lift up the outreach in prayer.

Caring God, pour an extra measure of Your grace on the people of the Community Cupboard in Kitchener, Ontario, so they may continue to be a blessing to those who need their help. You have promised if it is done to the least of our brothers and sisters it is done to You. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.



Be part of a display of Reformation items

In this 500th anniversary year of the Reformation, we invite you to check out the display table in the back corner of the narthex that showcases items related to the Reformation.

Feel free to drop off and share your own personal Reformation items on this table! Such items may include books, DVDs, art, posters, photos, clothes, etc. (If you are leaving your items on the table, please have your name on the belonging so we know who to return the item to).

Help Wanted

The Board of Education is looking for a director for the children's Christmas program in December. Please notify anyone on the education board (Donna Gash, Natalie Keith, Nichelle Russell, Tricia Schwark, Delia Stevenson, Denise Timm) if you are interested in taking on this role. Thanks!

Join the choir

Choir will be starting on Sunday, September 24, after church. New voices, and the people who go with them, are welcome.

Keeping up with the Ulmers

Rev. Howard Ulmer will join the Eden Care Community team to assist with the Regina Lutheran Hospital Chaplaincy and the Regina Lutheran Home in Regina. He will provide pastoral and spiritual care services to the home but will be particularly involved with the hospital chaplaincy.

Rev. Ulmer has also begun assisting the the Lutheran Laymen's League fair booth group in Regina.

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).

God's promises fulfilled in Jesus

In the July/August issue of *The Spirit* we looked at Scripture passages referring to **Jesus** as my **Saviour, Lord, Love and Peace**. This month we will focus on **Jesus** as my **Forgiveness, Righteousness and Deliverer**.

There are many passages in the Old and New Testaments referring to Jesus in very personal ways that touch each of us. The Scripture passages chosen are given as examples, but there are many more that can be drawn upon for each descriptive word being used here.

Jesus Is my Forgiveness

Psalm 32: 1-2 – "Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit is no deceit."

Isaiah 43:25 – "I, I am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake, and I will not remember your sins."

1 John 1:9 – "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Colossians 2:13-14 – "And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by cancelling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This He set aside, nailing it to the cross."

Jesus is my Righteousness

Isaiah 32:17 – "And the effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever."

2 Corinthians 5:21 – "For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God."

Romans 5:17 – "If, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ."

Titus 3:5- 7 – "He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that being justified by His grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

Jesus is my Deliverer

Isaiah 61:1 – "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to bring good news to the poor, He sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;"

John 8: 31b-32, 36 – "If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." "So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."

2 Corinthians 3:17 – "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom."

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

Stewardship

Winston Churchill reportedly said that “we make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.” According to Churchill then, our lives are defined less by what we have gotten, and more by what we give away.

Our Lord’s life is defined in this way. He gave completely of Himself for us. He became man for us. He taught the truth of God’s Word. He healed those with many and various diseases. He died the death that we deserve because of sin. He gave of Himself in order to save us from sin, death, and hell. And so, it is that by giving completely of Himself, He got for Himself us, making us citizens of His eternal kingdom by grace.

As it was for Jesus, so it is also for us. We get more from giving than we do from simply getting. For giving softens our hearts and frees us from the grip which the worries of this world and making a living has on us. For when we are singularly focused on making a living, we are singularly focused on what we get. That mindset begins to bleed into all areas of our lives—our relationships with friends and family, with neighbours and coworkers, and with the Lord. It shifts our focus from asking the question—

How can I be a friend, family member, neighbour, and servant to others—to asking the question—what have they done for me lately. We become more selfish instead of selfless.

But when we give, we do not have less, we have more because when we give we join in the bond of friendship

and family, the bond of service to those around us out of love for them. And love is the fulfillment of the Law. It is the nature of God Himself, for God is Love. Thus we are reflecting the divine nature. As Jesus said “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35).

Over the last several months, the Board of Stewardship has been sharing with you in a more deliberate way, messages about the financial needs of the congregation. We reported to you in July that our offerings and other revenue from January to June 30, 2017 totaled \$120,769 compared to our total expenses of \$137,237 leaving us with a shortfall of revenue of \$16,468. A year ago, at the end of June 2016, we had a deficit of \$5,978. Thus, this year’s deficit is about \$10,000 higher than last year. Included in the 2017 expenses is about \$4,000 spent on repairing the asphalt on the north side of the church which required repair to prevent further water leaking into the basement.

The needs of the congregation are ongoing and we ask for your prayers as we manage our financial challenges. We also encourage you to consider making your offering donations through the Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR) program available to all of us. The amount you give is certainly your own decision but using the PAR program ensures that your offerings are made whether you are in church on a given Sunday or away. This is important for the church to manage its cash flow and pay its ongoing bills especially during the summer months when attendance is typically lower.

For those of you who make your offerings using the envelopes you are provided, we remind you to please mark your offering amount on the front of your offering envelope. The offering counters find that helps to avoid counting errors and ensures your offerings are recorded accurately.

*God’s Blessings!
Board of Stewardship*

Visitation – a part of Caring Ministry

In John 13:34, Jesus tells us, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.” Just as He showed care and concern to those around Him, we are to do the same.

The caring ministry committee is reviewing the current caring ministry model and have discussed member visitation to our shut-ins and other members. We also discussed whether

visitation should be added to the scope of the current caring ministry model that has been in existence for about a year and a half. We feel visitation is an important part of caring ministry, but that it may not fit into the current model where, once the short-term need of a member has been identified, a coordinator matches a volunteer to fulfill that need.

We feel there is a need to have information available that identifies

those members who might benefit from visitation, as well as when they were last visited. This information might then facilitate decisions about who might be visited. While visiting might be done on an individual basis, it might be done more easily as a team.

While many details remain to be worked out in terms of how this might work, the first step would be to determine who would volunteer

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to make visits.

We encourage you to consider being involved in this additional form of caring ministry in the congregation. The frequency of visits might be something like once a month, or even once every couple of months, and is not scheduled in any

way. **If you would like to volunteer to visit fellow members, please contact one of us to let us know.** The Caring Ministry group, would then work out the process that might be followed.

Also, if you have any other questions, please contact a member of the Caring Ministry group:

Dianne Gilbert
Ron and Ludy Jeschke
Natalie Keith
Angela Neufeld
Verla Schmirler
Daryl Walter

Common Myths on LCC's Restructuring

While delegates will vote on the proposed new structure and the synod convention and then it will require votes at district conventions, in the end congregations will also each need to vote. We, therefore, need to be as informed as possible.

The following, by Rev. Paul Schallhorn, secretary of Lutheran Church–Canada's Commission on Constitutional Matters and Structure, is taken from *The Canadian Lutheran*. If you would prefer to read it online, go to www.canadianlutheran.ca/common-myths-on-lccs-restructuring/.

“Just the facts, Ma'am.” Millions of people in the 1950's tuned in weekly to hear Jack Webb, aka Sergeant Joe Friday on *Dragnet*, say his famous catch phrase. Over the years it became part of everyone's vocabulary as people trying to sound clever would interject: “Just the facts, Ma'am.” It was as famous as another line from that era uttered by Humphrey Bogart in *Casablanca*, “Play it again, Sam.” There's only one problem: neither line is factual; they are both misquoted and were never said in the way we have come to “remember” them.

The same could be said of Lutheran Church–Canada's (LCC) process of possible restructuring. There are a number of myths that have developed over the course of the

last 18 months as the Commission on Constitutional Matters and Structure (CCMS) has presented their proposal at various stages. In order to clear the air of some of the major misconceptions, we will stick to “Just the facts.”

MYTH #1: We are only talking restructuring because of the ABC District Church Extension Fund (CEF) crisis.

FACT: While the CEF crisis in the ABC District has had a major role to play in bringing restructuring to the forefront in peoples' minds, it is certainly not the sole reason why the CCMS is providing a possible plan to restructure LCC. The CCMS was given its mandate because all three Districts in Convention passed resolutions for the CCMS to look into this matter and provide a plan for the upcoming Synod Convention in October 2017. We are simply doing what we have been tasked to do; but it goes much deeper than this.

When LCC came into existence in 1988, instead of creating a new structure that would fit our situation in Canada, delegates voted to borrow—in its entirety—the structure that they knew from The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). The prevailing thought was we could fine-tune or change this structure as we moved forward and make it our own. As early as 1993, a taskforce was

struck to begin this process. Some of their proposals were passed at the next Synod Convention, many were not, but the unwieldiness of the LCMS structure we borrowed and were now using could not be understated because it is built for a Synod of millions not thousands. The CCMS as part of its job has then looked at our structure since that time proposing various changes over the years—some of which were major, some minor; some of which were passed, some not. The fact is restructuring has been part of LCC's history from its beginning even though it may have been highlighted by the recent events in the West.

MYTH #2: The proposed one administrative structure from the CCMS creates a centralization of power.

FACT: This would be true if there were no checks and balances or a limitation to the authority that the Synod Board of Directors (or any other entity within the proposed structure) would wield; but that's not the case. Every board, commission, committee, council, or person, at every level has been given a certain amount of authority to fulfil their role but in a manner that limits that authority to their specific task. In other words, authority/power is channelled in a very specific detailed

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manner to provide nimbleness between conventions for the various entities to do their job without having to wait until the next convention to make necessary changes yet without giving them a *carte blanche* to make sweeping changes that would affect everyone without everyone's input.

The other factor that changes with the proposed structure is that everyone will have a voice in determining our future not just a few. Currently we have only a representative number of delegates making decisions on our behalf at Synod Conventions; in the proposed structure every congregation will attend and make decisions affecting the direction of LCC. Furthermore, by making the decisions as a whole, we all will have a hand in determining how much authority is given to the Board of Directors and how it is used between conventions.

It bears pointing out that presently we are following a practice called a "federation of Districts," that is, each District acts independently of each other and also of Synod. That is part of our history as we were three independent Districts under the umbrella of the LCMS before we became autonomous. The spinoff of this is that we have four different goals and plans and agendas that are being attempted to be fulfilled across LCC. Moving forward under the proposed structure we would have one vision and one plan which will make for a more unified approach to achieving our goals.

MYTH #3: Our current structure is not the problem and making sweeping changes is not necessary and too drastic.

FACT: There are a number of major factors moving forward that cosmetic changes or no change at all to our current structure will not address nor fix. The elephant in the room that no one likes to talk about is the fact that

membership in our congregations and therefore Synod is declining which has an impact on a number of fronts not the least of which is financial. Over the years we have over-budgeted and therefore overspent more than what we have received from people's giving in the offering plates. The figure our Synod treasurer calculated before the ABC District CEF crisis was roughly \$650,000 which includes Synod and the three Districts.

So where did the money come from to make up this huge shortfall? We have relied heavily on investment returns that are not guaranteed to always be positive, and on reserve funds which are not inexhaustible. This trend cannot continue and many have been trying to point this out for years to no avail. The ABC District has exhausted all of their capital and cannot have a CEF ever again, the Central District has barely enough to meet their current needs, and the East District which is in the most "favourable" position still relies too much on investment returns to make up \$200,000 plus of their budget.

What we counted on in the past to meet our financial commitments cannot be counted upon any longer. We are just one more CEF crisis or market downturn away from a total collapse of LCC as we know it. So the CCMS, with figures from our Synod treasurer, has planned a more realistic budget that does not rely on these "extras" which cannot be counted upon. Does this have an impact on the proposed structure? Definitely; we will not be able to afford as much as we think we can now, but by following a more realistic budget, we will be able to better position ourselves for the future. This is what we have attempted to build into the proposed structure.

Another important factor that is directly attributable to the current structure is the lack of oversight Synod has on the rest of the Synodical family. Because

Synod and the Districts (and the other entities affiliated with LCC like the two seminaries, etc.) are incorporated separately, Synod has no authority over any of them. This has led to Concordia University, Edmonton removing itself from LCC (without any remuneration) and the unfortunate ABC District CEF crisis—to name just two examples. What has come out of this difficult time in our history is that our current structure is terribly flawed. The fact that an entity affiliated with LCC over which LCC has no oversight is able to walk away with our assets or bring us to our knees and perhaps threaten our very existence is untenable.

While there are still a number of other myths that could be treated, time and space are limited. Suffice it to say, we as a CCMS have been listening to all concerns and suggestions at every stage of this process, and while we cannot guarantee that everything we hear will be agreed upon and incorporated given the polar opposites of various viewpoints, nevertheless, the proposed structure is not our own making, it is yours as we have taken your input and crafted the proposed Convention Draft based on what you as a whole have shared with us.

As always, we pray for God's guidance through the Holy Spirit to direct us in the way He wants us to work for Him as we walk together.