

RADIO BROADCAST, ALTAR FLOWERS, OR COFFEE FELLOWSHIP

2017 Radio Broadcast - To sponsor a radio broadcast it is \$80. **Open Dates:** February (26); March (5, 12, 19); April (2, 30); May (7); June (18); July (2, 9, 16, 30); August (27); September (3, 17); October (1, 8, 15, 22, 29); November (5, 12, 26); December (3, 10, 24-4:30 p.m., 31).

2017 Flowers On The Altar. The sign-up chart is located on the bulletin board by the balcony staircase.

2017 Coffee Fellowship - Cookies and bars are optional. Please check the kitchen to make sure you have coffee and juice to serve. If you would like to be on the permanent coffee fellowship volunteer list and be assigned to serve on Sundays with no volunteers, please call the church office.

Please notify the office for any changes, additions, or cancellations. Thank you to everyone who has sponsored or volunteered for any of these special services for the ministry of St. Paul. If you would like one of these dates, please call the church office 324-3049.

St. Paul Pancake and Sausage Supper on Monday, February 5 from 5:00-7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Free Will donation.

St. Paul Camp Committee's "The Artist's Hand" Painting Party on Sunday, February 12 at 1:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Entry fee \$25./person.

PRISCILLA CIRCLE

Will meet on Monday, **February 13** at 7:00 p.m. at Gladys Drenkow's Home. Hostess/Bible Study:

MISSION & OUTREACH

Will meet on Wednesday, **February 8** at 9:00 a.m. in the church fellowship hall, Little Dresses. (Potluck Lunch)

DO-DAY

Will meet on Wednesday, **February 22** at 9:00 a.m. in the church fellowship hall. (Potluck Lunch)

BIBLE STUDY

Sack Lunch Bible Study meet on Tuesdays, **February 7, 14, 21 & 28** at 12:00 p.m. in the lounge.

Men's Early Risers meet on Wednesdays, **February 1, 8, 15 & 22** at 7:00 a.m. at Cook's Café.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School Awareness Sunday with a Joyful Noise Offering during the worship service on **February 5**.

ST. PAUL YOUTH ACTIVITIES:

JAM:

February 1, 8, 15 & 22 - **5:00 - 6:30 p.m.** - JAM Meets (Meal Served)

Junior High Youth:

February 1, 8, 15 & 22 - **6:15 - 7:30 p.m.** - Jr. High Youth Meets

Senior High Youth:

February 1 - **8:00 - 9:00 p.m.** - Youth/Parent And Pastor Night

February 8, 15 & 22 - **8:00 - 9:00 p.m.** - Sr. High Meets

February 26 - **10:15 a.m.** - Sr. High Ski Trip To Great Bear In Sioux Falls (Return 7:00 p.m.)

YOUTH WORSHIP TEAMS:

February 5, 12, 19 & 26 - **7:00 - 8:00 p.m.** - Youth Worship Practice

From Pastor Craig

As I promised, in honor of this year being the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, I'm sharing some of Luther's writings in each newsletter. What you first need to know is that Luther wrote a LOT, there is a massive amount of material to choose from. There are 79 volumes of Luther's Works. Not only did Luther write extensively, but he was writing when the printing press originated - so many of his writings were mass produced, circulated, and collected. This is a guy who singlehandedly translated the bible into everyday German so the masses could read it, cranked out steady correspondence with many individuals, and wrote years of sermons and scripture commentary. Fortunately, professional theologians and historians have done the work of compiling Luther's most read, and most influential writings.

One also needs to keep Luther's context in mind, to understand his emphasis. A three sentence summary is vastly inadequate, but here we go: Access to Christian writings (the Bible, etc) was limited to the few literate people among the monks & church leaders. Copies of the Bible were handwritten, expensive, and hard to come by - so that even when Luther first became a monk, he did not immediately have access to a bible. Years of entrenched corruption allowed many church leaders to take advantage of this -- to mislead and manipulate people with religious fears, false teaching, and superstition.

Luther's Tower Experience:

Martin Luther Discovers the True Meaning of Righteousness

An Excerpt From:

Preface to the Complete Edition of Luther's Latin Works (1545)

by Dr. Martin Luther, 1483-1546

But I, blameless monk that I was, felt that before God I was a sinner with an extremely troubled conscience. I couldn't be sure that God was appeased by my satisfaction. I did not love, no, rather I hated the just God who punishes sinners. In silence, if I did not blaspheme, then certainly I grumbled vehemently and got angry at God. I said, "Isn't it enough that we miserable sinners, lost for all eternity because of original sin, are oppressed by every kind of calamity through the Ten Commandments? Why does God heap sorrow upon sorrow through the Gospel and through the Gospel threaten us with his justice and his wrath?" This was how I was raging with wild and

I meditated night and day on those words until at last, by the mercy of God, I paid attention to their context: "The justice of God is revealed in it, as it is written: 'The just person lives by faith.'" I began to understand that in this verse the justice of God is that by which the just person lives by a gift of God, that is by faith. I began to understand that this verse means that the justice of God is revealed through the Gospel, but it is a passive justice, i.e. that by which the merciful God justifies us by faith, as it is written: "The just person lives by faith." All at once I felt that I had been born again and entered into paradise itself through open gates. Immediately I saw the whole of Scripture in a different light. I ran through the Scriptures from memory and found that other terms had analogous meanings, e.g., the work of God, that is, what God works in us; the power of God, by which he makes us powerful; the wisdom of God, by which he makes us wise; the strength of God, the salvation of God, the glory of God.

I exalted this sweetest word of mine, "the justice of God," with as much love as before I had hated it with hate. This phrase of Paul was for me the very gate of paradise. Afterward I read Augustine's "On the Spirit and the Letter," in which I found what I had not dared hope for. I discovered that he too interpreted "the justice of God" in a similar way, namely, as that with which God clothes us when he justifies us. Although Augustine had said it imperfectly and did not explain in detail how God imputes justice to us, still it pleased me that he taught the justice of God by which we are justified.

We take for granted much of our understanding of the gospel, here we can see what a revelation it was for Luther. This new grasp of the gospel led him to question common practices of the Church at that time; the selling of 'indulgences' was of particular concern to Luther. This was the idea, simply put, that one could pay for merit with money; payments for indulgences would help pay for the new cathedral being built in Rome, and customers were promised less time in purgatory for themselves or whoever they were paying for. The deeper root cause of such false teaching was the ignorance among the 'christian' masses of basic understanding of the gospel. The lack of sound instruction he addressed with the creation of the small catechism - which I will excerpt in a future newsletter. Luther set his mind to illuminating these issues - to reform the church, not divide it - to proclaim the true sense of the gospel that had been lost to most people: God's grace in Christ.