

President's Note for February 2020

"You took on me what was mine; yet set on me what was yours." Martin Luther

Martin Luther's writings are full of wisdom and great insight. Yes, Christ took upon himself the sin of the world and by that agonizing passion of love made it possible for us, through the power of the Holy Spirit and the gift of grace, to find faith, regain righteousness and achieve redemption and salvation. Luther also wrote, "You became what you were not, that I might become what I was not." What a blessing for us, what a gift of love for God to draw himself to us through the sacrifice of his only begotten son. Let us strive to be thankful, humble and reverent in this too often noisy, hectic, self-absorbed world.

So, what's been happening and what is coming up here at St. Paul's? As I write this column we are about to hold our annual congregational meeting. I anticipate the day will be a good one as together we review what we experienced and accomplished in 2019 and look forward to what 2020 will bring. I pray for blessings for the church, our church and our nation and world. Whatever the new year may bring let us strive to discern and do what is right in the eyes of God as we worship and pray together. As we've stated before, our church will hold a memorial service for long time friend, member and sister in Christ LaVonne Strutz on Friday February 14th at one pm. LaVonne was called home to her Lord last year after attaining her oft spoken goal of reaching one hundred years of age. LaVonne was a model of service for us all, particularly with her service by the instruction of our children in Sunday School for many decades.

The last Wednesday of February, February 26th, will bring Ash Wednesday and the beginning of our Lenten journey of reflection, abstinence and prayer. We will hold worship service that day starting at 12:15pm in our sanctuary. Lenten Soup Suppers and Devotionals will begin the following Wednesday and continue every Wednesday at six pm in our Fireside Room until Holy Week. There will be a signup sheet in the Fireside Room for those willing and able to make soup for these devotionals. We typically have two different soups to choose from or sample each week. The soup is invariably delicious and typically more of a treat than a sacrifice.

You've likely noticed the mysterious appearance of a rather large wooden cross on our campus in front of Grace Presbyterian Church. No one seems to know from where

this gift appeared, but we will accept the gift with thanks and take it as a good sign, a blessing. The question now is where best to place the cross? We, in concert with Grace, are trying to determine where the cross should be placed, likely somewhere near the street to draw attention to the community beyond our campus that God does exist and to come join us in worshipping our Lord, our creator here.

We do have a few projects on the horizon like signs, painting, roof repair and bathroom upgrades. If you know of good tradesmen or women that you can recommend please let us know. We have a beautiful facility and campus that portions of could use a little tlc. Together with Grace Presbyterian we aim to complete a few projects we've spoken about, but have yet to act upon. Do thank our VP Erik for getting the lighting on our campus working and on timers. This rejuvenated lighting not only enhances the appearance of our campus, but helps improve security as well. Erik is also working on some other door related improvements as well. Thanks Erik!

Finally, while we live in an often divided, frequently mean spirited, seemingly ever more secular world let us not forget who we are and who we are called to be. As Christians we are called upon to love one another, love and forgive our neighbor, even our enemies, remembering, as Pr. Townsend reminded us in a recent sermon which echoed teachings of St. Augustine, that "God loves each one of us as if there were only one of us", that each of us are made in and reflect God's image, even though in some instances that image can become so twisted and distorted as to be unrecognizable to us, but not to Him, as we strive to live and spread the Gospel. Our path may not always be an easy one, but as a community of faith we will persevere, hold true to our faith, do some good, and, God willing, share in a bit of good food and good times among friends, particularly with fellow believers, friends in Christ. Let us continue to pray for and work for the ill, the oppressed and for all the many who struggle physically, mentally and spiritually in this world. May our Lord guide us and watch over them and us in the year ahead.

"We all carry about in our pockets His very nails." Martin Luther

Peace and blessings,

Chuck Prewett

Council President