

St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church
200 West Orange Street
Lititz, PA 17543

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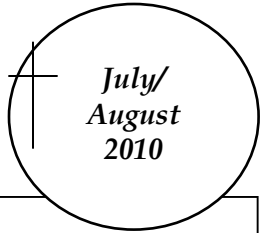
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THE EPISTLE

The Newsletter of the People of St. Paul



St. Paul Mission Statement

“As disciples in Christ’s Church, we gather to worship, to grow in faith, and to serve our community and our world.”

Please read the articles written from our lay voting members, Gail Benner and Wayne Gongaware for their personal experiences at this year’s Synod Assembly. Here are some highlights of the Synod Assembly this year:

- The Rite of Consecration of our newest deaconess Sister Ellen Doughty, a member of St. Paul Lutheran Church, York and was called by the Synod Council to serve as a chaplain at Pinnacle Health, Harrisburg.
- The installation of The Reverend Virginia A. Cover as an Assistant to the Bishop Penrose Hoover.
- The approval of the Synod Budget for 2011 of \$3,500,000.
- Approval and adoption of new minimum base salary and housing allowance for 2011 for a pastor, deaconess, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry who serve full-time according to years of experience.
- The defeat by 311 to 190 of a memorial to the 2011 Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA to rescind actions CA09.05.26 and CA09.05.27 of the 2009 Churchwide Assembly and to direct the appropriate churchwide units and offices to prepare

amendments to the policy documents, which were revised...in order to re-establish the prohibition of rostered service by homosexual persons in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships and to restore the requirement for rostered persons that sexual intimacy take place only in the context of heterosexual marriage.

- Referred a resolution to the Lower Susquehanna Synod regarding minimum salaries and to look for ways to work with churches who are not meeting the minimums.
- Referred a resolution to the Lower Susquehanna Synod regarding the funding of conference ministry and to consider ways to retain a portion of its congregations’ mission support dollars for the purpose of outreach and mission.
- Approved a resolution to direct the Synod Council to form a task force to review this synod’s procedures for the election of a bishop and to bring a report and recommendations including any recommended synod constitutional changes to the 2011 Assembly.

The Synod Assembly was uplifting and moving.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Jim Gable

ST. PAUL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

www.stpaullititz.org

Phone: (717) 626-4709 Fax: (717) 627-0425

Dial-A-Service Phone 625-4400

Office Hours: Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

SUMMER WORSHIP SERVICES & HOLY COMMUNION

Sundays 9:30 a.m.

Contemporary Worship Services

2nd Sundays in July & August at 9:30 AM

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Where is the good news? It's so hard to find it these days. Whenever I turn on the television or read a newspaper, my senses are overwhelmed by bad news:

- The horrendous oil disaster in the Gulf of Mexico
- Tensions between North and South Korea, Israel and Palestine and even some allies
- The economy and its impact on jobs, housing, investments
- Local fires and fatal automobile crashes

I've stopped watching the morning news, in order to keep myself from starting off my day in a state of depression.

The reality for me is that if I look to the word of the media to bring joy, peace, hope and good news to my life, I shall continue to be disappointed.

However, if I look to the word of God to bring these things to my life, then I shall never be disappointed. God's word, Holy Scripture, is a love story between God and God's creation. Within the pages of the Bible, we are able to find a lot of good news:

- The love of God who created the universe and declared it was "good"
- The love of God who brought Israel out of bondage in Egypt and led them to the Promised Land
- The psalmists' words of praise and thanksgiving to God when life is good and hope in God when times are tough
- The love of God through Christ Jesus that saves us from the power of sin, death and the devil and gives us new and abundant life now and into eternal life
- The promises of God and the faithfulness of God that never end, that can be counted on

I begin my mornings in the office with at least ten minutes of devotional time with God. The rest of the staff knows not to disturb me during this "be still" time.

In the midst of so many other words of challenge and stress, gloom and doom, it is so important and valuable to begin each day immersing myself in God's word. I encourage you to do the same! There is power in it. There is hope and comfort in it. There is direction in it. There is good news in it. Thanks be to God!

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Linda Hanus

Sunday School...

AUGSBURG

Bible Study books for June, July, & August are available in the lounge for those wanting to continue their studies over the summer.

Our New Sunday school season is just around the corner. We begin on Sunday, September 12, 2010 at 9:30 a.m.

We hope to see you all there for an exciting new adventure!



Ministers
The People of St. Paul

Pastor
Rev. James R. Gable, Jr. - jgable@stpaulinitz.org

Associate Pastor
Rev. Linda Hanus- lhanus@stpaulinitz.org

Director of Traditional Church Music
Ken Krause – KMKrause@aol.com

Director of Contemporary Church Music
Melodie Fair – fairs@ptd.net

Parish Secretary
Susan Faulkner – sfaulkner@stpaulinitz.org

Financial Secretary
Kim Swinko – kswinko@stpaulinitz.org

Christian Ed. /Youth Director
Lori Nikoloff – lnikoloff@stpaulinitz.org

Custodians
Ray Letteer – rletteer@stpaulinitz.org
Jim Templeton

Congregation Council Members
Christo Nikoloff Jason Hoffman
Barb Paynter Signe Fink
Dan Rusnock Joe Doster
Kathy Ross Jim Millhouse
Wayne Gongaware Laura Kiskaddon

Treasurer
Tom Trayer – tomtrayer@dejazzd.com

Stephen Leaders
Dave Althouse Nancy Weiss
Pastor Jim Gable Julia Silsorf
Kathy Trayer

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Hazel Nestleroth – Nestleroth@dejazzd.com

Web Designer
John Bell – jsbell@dejazzd.com

Publicity
Dick Mearig – rlmjrm@dejazzd.com

Nursery School
Denise Bedger, Director 625-3641

Christian Child Care Center
Gail Price, Director 627-0900

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Property: Blinds were installed by David Bossler (a father of a child in the CCCC) and are beautiful. Room temperatures have lowered as a result of the new blinds. Security System - Heads of all groups need to get authorization from one of the pastors and see Susan Faulkner to get a key card. Jim Hovan is working on a letter to be given to everyone who has a key explaining the regulations on using the keys and doors.

Worship Life Team: A meeting has been scheduled for July 18 following the 9:30 service to brainstorm worship alternatives. Everyone is welcome.

Mission Life Team: is looking for a new team leader. Susan Yeager will end her term in July. John Lian has a car. Council thanks Don Stauffer for his service to John over the past several months of driving John to work. A letter was received from our missionary Steven Deal. Our Bridge of Hope mentee will graduate from the program in September.

Family Life Team: VBS will be on July 25-29. Library tables are ready to be painted. Youth activities have been planned for the summer and the youth mission trip will occur in July. Ideas for annual family events are being generated and will begin in September 2010.

OTHER COMMUNICATION:

The Artisans of St. Paul will begin planning for their bazaar at their meeting on June 15.

Thank you to Craig, Cindy, and Nancy for their years of service on Council.

LCO BARNSTORMERS GAME

LCO is sponsoring a Barnstormers game on Sat., August 14 at 7 p.m. A block of tickets have been reserved. Tickets will cost \$8.00. Reservations are due July 30, so mark your calendar now. We need one person to be our contact.

Summer Worship Assistants

We still need your help for our summer worship assistants schedule. Please sign up on the kiosk in the narthex!

VBS IS COMING SOON!

Vacation Bible School starts Sunday, July 25 and ends Thursday, July 29. The times each evening are 6:30 p.m.—8:00 p.m. and it's family oriented, so moms, dads and grandparents can join in the fun too! Come out to enjoy and experience "EGYPT, Joseph's Journey from Prison to Palace"! You might see some familiar faces wandering around the Marketplace!



An appreciative thank you goes to David Bossler and Accent Window Fashions for the new blinds and their installation. David was instrumental in the purchase and installation and gave us a wonderful deal. David is the father of one of the daycare children. If you see him around the church, please be sure to thank him!

A thank-you card was received from the House of His Creation in Lititz. It states:

Dear friends at St. Paul, Thanks for lending House of His Creation your tables for our yard sale. We had a great sale and raised a lot of money. Thanks to Ray for helping deliver the tables too.

Deb Zimmerman

House Mom

A Leap of Faith

Sunday afternoon after the fantastic outdoor church service, my dad and I lazily laid on the couches in our family room watching a special on the Military Channel.

They were talking about PJs (Para-Jumpers). PJs are members of the Air Force who perform parachute rescue. The three steps taken on every mission made are insertion, securing, and extracting. PJs insert themselves into the area, make sure it's safe for them to move the injured soldier, and get them to safety as quickly as possible.

As I watched the strong, very well trained men jump from both planes and helicopters, I thought about how they were taking a leap of faith. They were all willing to sacrifice themselves to save the lives of wounded soldiers.

The moment they jump from the plane they are depending on their knowledge of what to do and God to keep them safe. Plummeting towards the ground with more than one hundred pounds of equipment must be one of the most dangerous, adrenaline pumping actions. In life we all, at some point, take a leap of faith. Whether it be an ultimate risk or jumping into a new experience. No matter what baggage we hold, we have a strong belief that God will be there to get us safely to the next step in our lives.

I pray that God keeps all of the service men and women out of harm's way, and He helps each one of you take a leap of faith.

~Marissa Morin

June Council Meeting Highlights

SAINT PAUL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH, LITITZ, PA

Pastor Gable led opening devotions focusing on Psalm 32, sharing God's love.

Financial Report: Highlights included: There was a very low giving on the last Sunday in May; benevolence did not get paid for May (\$1800 below budget YTD); Finance Committee is working on creating a monthly cash flow report.

Administrative Teams:

Finance: The audit is almost complete and there will be procedural recommendations given. Challenge Gift for Window Debt Reduction will be advertised in Epistle. Mailing of Record of Giving went out last week and the Finance Committee is working on correcting some of the errors found on this report. Budget for 2011 – Finance Committee will ask for all budget requests to be made by month. Budget requests are due by September 15. Ministry Team leaders should also establish a long-term wish list for items. The Lutheran magazine costs \$2343/year. Discussion took place as to how to lower this cost.

Council: Nancy thanked all Council members for their year of service. The Strategic Pathways developed at the Council retreat will be put in the Epistle.

Nominating: Nominating Committee has 4 openings and Council has 3 openings. A Congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, June 20 at the end of the 9:30 service before the dismissal to vote on nominees. Nancy and Craig will provide an orientation for new Council members.

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This year two things stand out that exceeded my expectations...being in the presence and listening to our Presiding Bishop of the ELCA and President of the Lutheran World Federation, Mark Hanson and the seven ministry highlights showing God's Work and Our Hands being done here in our Lower Susquehanna Synod.

Bishop Hanson was our keynote speaker, bible study leader and preacher at the closing worship service. His amazing stories about our work in the world and his call to action through the bible studies had us all emotionally drained and at the same time excited with joy. Throughout the assembly there were seven ministry media moments (DVDs) highlighting the ministries of congregations and conferences in our Synod. Again these ministries brought up in us many emotions through tears of sadness and joy. There is no doubt that the work of the Holy Spirit is alive and strong in us as we bring Hope to those who are in need. These highlights along with actions of the assembly will be available on the Synod Website. I encourage each of you to see them.

Yours in Christ,

Wayne Gongaware, lay voting member

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATES!

Heather Wilson who graduated from Warwick High School and will be attending Lancaster General Hospital in the fall for nursing.

Brandon Legerlotz graduated from Manheim Central High School

Zachary Engroff, Timothy Herrmann, Naomi Kauffman, Kate Lessig, Austin Klinger all graduated from Warwick High School. We wish you all a bright and blessed future!

BLANKET THE WORLD



As part of Egypt VBS, our church will join Operation Kid-to-Kid, an international mission project that allows hundreds of thousands of kids to create and send soft, cuddly blankets and Bible coloring books to hurting children in Africa.

During Egypt, kids and adults will make special blankets that say "God Loves Me" right on them! World Vision will add these cuddly blankets to backpacks filled with health and hygiene items and school supplies. Plus, kids and adults will personalize a Bible coloring book to go into the backpack, as well.

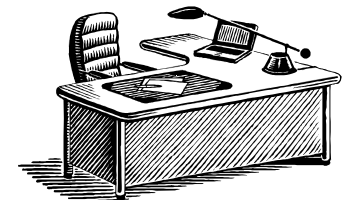
From the Office at St Paul.....

I hope everyone is enjoying the summer so far, my family and I certainly are!

I hope the template and service guide that we have implemented for the summer is going over well. It definitely has helped with cost saving, as there is a lot less paper waste and cost involved in printing.

"Going Green" is a regular statement in my household and my 9 year old brings to my attention all the time how much we, as a nation and individuals, waste our natural resources. We have beautiful ELW books right in front of us in the pews and each time we get them out to use them we need to remember that they are helping us to "Be Green" as a church. Change isn't always easy, but as we know, it is inevitable. Any change that positively effects the church, the earth and our community is a good thing! So as we work with these changes, I hope we all can keep in mind the "big picture" and support one another as we here at St. Paul move forward in our efforts to utilize the resources we have and preserve those that God has richly provided for us.

Susan



Women of the ELCA

Even though the warm (perhaps hot) and laid-back summer atmosphere is here, St. Paul Women of the ELCA is working very hard on next year's activities. More information will be forthcoming concerning the show "Church Basement Ladies" at the Dutch Apple and Ingathering Sunday on October 3, 2010, as well as the 2010-2011 circle meetings and other W/ELCA events. Fall will be here before we know it!!

Craft Night

Our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 6 at 7 p.m. in the lounge with no instructor scheduled. If you are interested in joining us, all you need to do is show up with something to work on. If you have a craft that you are willing to teach or are interested in learning a specific craft, let us know and we will try our best to accommodate your request. Questions? Please contact Joyce at 627-1901, or email her at je_groff@msn.com

Artisans of St. Paul Holiday Craft Show Update

Attention Crafters of St. Paul!! St. Paul will be holding its first annual Holiday Craft Show on Saturday, November 20, 2010. The Artisans of St. Paul are looking for members who have an interest in selling handmade crafts, paintings, furniture, etc. at this event. Crafters will be able to rent 8 ft. tables for \$25 a piece, with the proceeds being donated to the Lutheran Camping Fund. Registration forms will be available soon.

If you are interested in being involved in the craft show, but do not have enough items for an entire table, there will be an opportunity to donate handmade items to be sold at a silent auction that will take place on the 20th as well. Proceeds from the silent auction will benefit St. Paul.

This is an exciting new adventure for the Artisans of St. Paul and we look forward to seeing all of the talent our congregation has to offer! Please contact Hilary Hoffman with any questions at hilary.hoffman@verizon.net or 581-6540.

St. Paul Member Update

Baptisms:

June 6, 2010-Grace Marie and Camryn Elizabeth McCormick, twin daughters of John and Johnna McCormick

Transfers:

June 2010-Joe and Cindy Geesey

Deaths:

June 10, 2010-Kathryn Mummert entered the Church Triumphant

Removed By Request:

June 2010-Mary Allwein

Change of Address:

Arthur and Barb Paynter, 351 Balmer Rd., Lititz (as of July 23)

Christine Lauren & Leeann Runkle, , 48 Buttonwood Dr., Lititz

Scott, Carrie & Brady Kline, 478 Candlewyck Rd., Lancaster, 17601

Free Educational Series for Caregivers

The Caring for the Caregiver Educational Series is a free four-week program designed to provide family caregivers new skills and the confidence to better care for their loved ones and themselves. This educational program is open to any family caregiver in the community, including those whose loved ones are not Hospice patients. The series will be held weekly starting Monday, July 19, 10 a.m.—2 p.m. at the Brossman Center for Health, 136 Lake St., Ephrata. A continental breakfast will be provided. Registration is required. For more information, or to register, contact Carol Vanden Berg at (717) 735-2491 or evandenberghospiceoflancaster.org.



Stephen Ministries--35 years and counting!!
2001-2005

Times of triumph, times of sadness. In the past five years Stephen Ministries has seen the 9,000th Stephen Series congregation enrolled and the 50,000th Stephen Leader trained. ChristCare has grown steadily, and in 2005 Stephen Ministries finalized a new vision for training: group-based ChristCare Group Leader training. But on January 19, 2002, we also lost co-founder Joan Haugk--a loyal and beloved leader to the end--to ovarian cancer. Out of Dr. Haugk's deep grief and loss came two new resources to help others deal with grief--the Journeying through Grief books and Don't Sing Songs to a Heavy Heart.

What lies ahead? We at Stephen Ministries will forge ahead into new areas of ministry that call us to explore while we continue to support and enrich the systems and resources we offer. We look forward to working with you and serving you for many, many years to come and strive together "to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:12).

Care Quote

Oh, Almighty and Everlasting God, Creator of Heaven, Earth and the Universe: Help me to be, to think, to act what is right, because it is right; make me truthful, honest and honorable in all things; make me intellectually honest for the sake of right and honor without thought of reward to me. Give me the ability to be charitable, forgiving and patient with my fellow men; help me to understand their motives and their shortcomings--even as Thou understandest mine! Amen. Harry Truman (1884-1972), U.S. President

(held at Messiah College, Grantham, PA on June 10-12, 2010)

God's work. Our hands.

"One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, at three o'clock in the afternoon. And a man lame from birth was being carried in. People would lay him daily at the gate of the temple called the Beautiful Gate so that he could ask for alms from those entering the temple. When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked them for alms. Peter looked intently at him, as did John, and said, "Look at us." And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. But Peter said, "I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk." And he took him by the right hand and raised him up; and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong....All the people saw him walking and praising God, and they recognized him as the one who used to sit and ask for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him..."

This scripture comes from part of the text, Act 3: 1-16, that was used for one of Bishop Mark Hanson's bible studies during the assembly. I encourage you to read the whole text and to find in various places of the text what expectations people have and for yourself to ponder what expectations you have in your life and how God may enter your life and at times **shatter** those **expectations**. The gift to walk was certainly not at all on that beggars' mind. God's work. Our hands!

I could have chosen any one of the many other scriptures used throughout the assembly to make the point that for me personally and for the rest of us who attended this assembly as your voting members, that what we expected had been far exceeded beyond anything we thought we would feel about being there in that time and space. It has always been an honor to go and represent St. Paul and to experience and be among the members of the wider Lutheran Church.

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A Message from Missions

The summer is upon us, which means that the Synod Assembly has convened and from what I've heard, it was a particularly meaningful one. The global mission event was held on Friday night and featured the Lowdens who have been in Tanzania the past two years connecting with many congregations throughout that country and have been very faithful in reporting their activities to us. While they won't be returning to Arusha, they've certainly left a very positive memory for those Tanzanians they've touched through their outreach. Our thoughts and prayers go with them.



Speaking of missionaries, I heard from Stephen Deal, our missionary to Costa Rica, and he wrote an email expressing his enjoyment concerning his visit to St. Paul in February. He writes:

Pentecost Greetings from Costa Rica! You've probably concluded that I've fallen off the face of the earth. It's not that, just that I've been on the fly for the past month. I received your latest message in the midst of a visit with our companion congregation church in Honduras where the fallout from last year's coup continues to be felt, especially in terms of increasing violence and human rights' violations. In truth, I found the security situation in the country to be far more worrisome than when I was there last year.

After Honduras, it was back to Costa Rica for a time and then off to Nicaragua in early May for my first visit there this year. The serious drought situation had eased somewhat. What a blessing to see the green shoots of bean plants pushing up through the earth as contrasted with the brown dust in those same fields six months ago.

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Offer a variety of **WORSHIP** Services

- Worship Services other than Sunday
- Expanding Sunday opportunities
- Evaluate all types of worship

Make it relevant and current

Define **DISCIPLESHIP** of all ages as a way to witness to God's love in the World

- Create ways for congregational participation
 - o Lead by example
 - o Use the Marks of Discipleship including
 - ✦ Daily Prayer
 - ✦ Weekly Worship
 - ✦ Bible Reading
 - ✦ Service
 - ✦ Spiritual Friendships
 - ✦ Giving

Cultivate welcoming behavior

Create relevant **PROGRAMS** and activities for all ages

- Package Sunday School differently
- Introduce new possibilities and determine frequency for programs

Pathways for Strategic Direction for St. Paul

May, 2010

Strengthen our **CONNECTION** to God and each other.

- Study the Bible to increase our learning and use the scriptures to discern what paths to take
- Use small groups to help create a plan for connecting
 - o Identify relationships between small groups and share what we learn
 - o Learn by Networking
 - o Develop a model for connecting, then test and refine it
 - o Should be flexible
 - o Realize this is an ongoing process
 - o Should include ways to connect for new disciples as well as ways to mentor

Create a detailed **COMMUNICATION** Plan

- Publicity/Marketing
 - o Support it with resources
 - o Improve website
 - o Plan for continual change
 - o Should be responsive to peoples needs
- o Provide training for interpersonal skills

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A Message from Missions continued

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Today is my final day back in Costa Rica before leaving once again—this time to Guatemala to begin an assignment of nearly three weeks as the ELCA representative to serve on a specialized team that will be conducting a mid-term evaluation of the LWF program here in Central America, a program that receives significant ELCA support through our gift to the World Hunger Appeal.

While I owe you a more extensive report, I at least wanted to send you this quick update. Please convey a special greeting to the members of your Ministry Team. Hopefully this will arrive in time to share the information with them before everyone takes a summer break from meetings.

With Peace,

Stephen



POLL FOR SUBSCRIBERS TO THE LUTHERAN

St. Paul provides a subscription to The Lutheran Magazine for each household at a cost of \$7.95 per year, per household. Many of you look forward to receiving The Lutheran each month, however; if you find that you are not reading it, or are not benefiting from this subscription at this time and would rather not receive it, please contact the church office to be removed from the subscription list.

Mutual Ministry & Personnel Committees

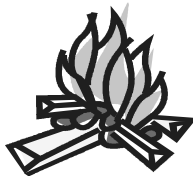
Fellow members of St Paul, we would like to have your feedback. The Personnel and Mutual Ministry Committees have set up 2 email addresses for you to give us your feedback on the pastors and staff. We would appreciate both positive and negative CONSTRUCTIVE comments. The only stipulation is that all feedback must have the writer's name included. This will enable both committees to ask for clarification of what has been written. No names will be used in any written or verbal communications concerning your confidential comments. The address to submit an email about the pastors is : stpaul.lititz.pastorfeedback@gmail.com and any staff comments should be sent to : stpaul.lititz.feedback@gmail.com . Only members of the Personnel Committee will have the password to access the employee email and only Mutual Ministry members can access the pastor feedback address. We welcome your feedback year round but any emails received by July 31st will be reviewed as part of the input used for pastor and staff evaluations. There will also be links to these email addresses on the St Paul website. We again want to insure you that all comments will be kept in strictest confidence.

Yours in Christ,

Mutual Ministry & Personnel Committees

LCO Kids

LCO Kids will be going back to the Wittel Farm this summer. The theme this year is "Faith On the Farm". Kids (ages 6 through Middle School) will be chaperoned to the farm in E-town for the program in the morning and eat lunch on the farm. We will then travel to Camp Kirchenwald in Colebrook for an afternoon swim in their pool. The day will round out with a stop at the Jigger Shop in Mount Gretna for ice cream on the way home. The cost is \$8.00 per person (checks to LCO) and 1 non-perishable food item (service project). Participants should bring swimwear and money for the Jigger Shop. Dates are July 7th and July 22nd. Depart St. Paul at 8:30 a.m. and return to St. Paul at 5:30 p.m. Sign up in the narthex. Questions? Please call Mark Mueller 626-5142.



Strategic Long Range Planning Retreat

Nancy C. Miller, Congregation Council President

At a long range planning retreat held on May 21 and 22 at Luther Acres, a group of leaders including Council and Ministry Team members met to formulate some strategic plans for St. Paul.

- We started our session with celebrating the mission work and what we were most proud of at St. Paul over the last decade. There was plenty and you were included!
- We then moved to a review and virtual video of the master renovation plans for St. Paul presented by Bonnie Sowers with the Ray Group.
- The Emerging Church discussion was led by Pastor Gable highlighting on the great challenges and opportunities for churches today. There were plenty of them too!
- Many concerns were raised in the look back and the focus forward as we become committed Disciples of Christ through our worship choices, our communications and our connection to God in a new way both internally and externally.

We jumped in with both feet on Saturday morning delving into our visions and images of the future of St. Paul. We moved quickly into defining our Missional Directions by interviewing three other members and asking the questions:

- As you look into the future of St. Paul, what is most important to carry forward from our recent past?
- What does it mean for St. Paul to be a discipleship model congregation?
- How can lay and rostered leadership most effectively enable ministry for the future?
- Name the top three priorities for the church in the next three years.

From a myriad of answers to these questions we arrived at some strategic directions and strategies for the next three to five years. These were introduced to you recently at the Ministry Team Meeting and the Congregational Meeting and are included here for your further study. We need YOU to help us to further develop these strategies and to take action to see them to fruition in our service for Christ as we become deeply committed disciples.



Samaritan Counseling Center Night at the Barnstormers

Saturday, July 31 at 6:30 p.m.



SAMARITAN COUNSELING CENTER

Here for hope and healing

Your support of the Samaritan Counseling Center allows us to ensure access to quality counseling, education and consultation services to individuals, couples and families in our community.

We raise
\$4
per ticket!

Buying Tickets Is Simple!

1. Go to www.LancasterBarnstormers.com and click on the "Fundraising Log-in" Button.
2. Click on your group's fundraising icon.
3. Enter your fundraising code.
4. Click "BUY".
5. Select your seats and complete your order.

Our fundraising code is:

SCC

code is case sensitive
***standard ticket fees apply**

509-HITS • www.LancasterBarnstormers.com

Synod Assembly Experience

By Gail Benner

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I was privileged to be your representative at the 2010 ELCA Synod Assembly on June 11 and 12 at Messiah College. What a wonderful and faith growing experience it was for me. The business of the assembly went along smoothly and was actually finished ahead of schedule thanks to the leadership of Bishop Penrose Hoover.

The theme of the assembly was "God's Work, Our Hands". On this theme, seven churches presented "Ministry Highlights" on video. Four of the churches and their ministry are:

1. St. John (Barna), Liverpool. Members make and sell apple butter to raise money for work in Tanzania.
2. Office of Youth Ministry (Help in Haiti). They are raising money and sending people to Haiti. With this money they have helped to build a school and have hopes of building more. They also sponsor a young woman, Marie Claire, who is a student at HACC in Harrisburg.
3. Swamp, Reinholds. This video spoke of the fire that destroyed their office (the sanctuary was spared) and the help they received from the surrounding communities.
4. Christ, Shrewsbury. They are raising money to aid the many hundreds of orphans in Bosnia who have been "warehoused" without any personal contact or nurturing. These children are virtual vegetables, just rocking back and forth. They cannot speak or respond. This video was heartbreaking.

The subject of hands came up time and again over the two days. In the videos, there were many hands: hands holding each other up, hands raised in praise, hands carrying and lifting, feeding and clothing.

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The highlight and Keynote Speaker was the Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding Bishop of the ELCA. He led us in two bible studies, a question and answer time, a report of the ELCA and a sermon. It seemed to me that each time he spoke to us it was more meaningful than the time before.

Bishop Hanson spoke of hands in the Bible: Luke 7:11-17. A dead boy being carried, the only son of his mother. Then Jesus touches his coffin. He gives the boy, now alive, back to his mother with his hands.

What are we doing with our hands? Are we giving new life? Are we giving hope? Bishop Hanson also asked us to go through the New Testament and list questions that Jesus asked, such as:

Who do you say that I am?

Which is easier to say: Your sins are forgiven or get up, take up your mat and walk?

Who are my mother and my brothers?

Why are you so afraid? Do you have no faith?

Are your hearts so hardened? Do you have eyes but fail to see, ears but fail to hear?

He told us we have had a collision with God. Death's journey was stopped cold on the tracks by the resurrection of Christ. "I have been crucified with Christ" - that's a collision! That same Christ has collided with you and with me in baptism. We are marked with the cross of Christ forever. We are bound to be free and free to be bound. He told us to go home expecting our life's journey to be interrupted again and again.

Dear friends, will you let your life journey be interrupted by Christ? Will I? I pray so. Thank you. I was truly humbled to be your representative at this year's synod assembly.

Gail Benner

Live a God-Pleasing Life!

As Christians, we are stewards or managers of all the gifts God has given us. This is quite a task, frankly, that we, on our own, are incapable of carrying out. Yet we don't have a choice; all Christians are called to be stewards. We are not left on our own, though. The God who calls us equips us as well.

"May the God of peace...equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen" (Hebrews 13:20-21)

Faith is the foundation of our stewardship. It is only through faith that we can please God, and it is only by faith in Christ's mighty power within us that we are able to do the works God has prepared for us to do.

If we are to be stewards **living a God-pleasing life**, we must follow the **path of discipleship** that Jesus lays out before us. We are called to serve, even as Jesus himself *"did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as ransom for many"*. (Matthew 20:28).

God-pleasing stewards give generously, even as their Master, Jesus, gave all he had, his very life. Generosity was the hallmark of the early Christians who *"shared everything they had...There were no needy persons among them"* (Acts 4:32, 34). Out of thankfulness to our giving God, who gives so generously, we, along with our spiritual forefathers, respond to the needs of others, giving to them as unto the Lord (Matthew 25:40).

During the months of September and October we will spend three Sundays learning and growing and becoming stewards living a **God-pleasing life**. It is my hope and prayer that you will attend both the worship services and the Bible studies for this very important, educational, and enriching program.

Pastor James R. Gable