

Pastor Hanus' Annual Report

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

“Praise the Lord!

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

For his steadfast love endures forever.” (Psalm 106:1)

How amazing it was for me to be thinking of this particular psalm, and upon opening my Bible opened right to it! As I look back on 2009, I am reminded of situations for which I really didn't want to thank the Lord. Economically speaking, it was a challenging year not only for our nation but also for us as individuals and as a congregation. Towards the end of the year, this was reflected in the proposed 2010 budget, as salaries and benefits of staff were cut. Some ministries saw a bare bones amount budgeted for their work. However, there is good news for which we can thank the Lord. On Commitment Sunday, the congregation committed to offering a substantial amount to the glory of God in terms of their stewardship of monetary offerings towards the ongoing ministries here at St. Paul.. And folks are fulfilling their commitments. This can turn the financial picture around in 2010. Praise the Lord!

Keeping our Mission Statement in front of us, as disciples of Christ, we continue to gather to worship, grow in faith and serve our community and world. This requires that we discern what this will look like in a 21st century world that continues to change and get smaller, being careful not “to throw the baby out with the bath water”. Modern technology and natural and human-made disasters affect the way we are connected to one another. So do the actions of the ELCA Churchwide Assemblies . We continue to wait to see how the decisions of last August's assembly will play out in the life of the church. I am hopeful!

I thank the Lord for the many and various ways that we love and serve God and neighbor here at St. Paul. God's steadfast love does endure forever. May each of us return our thanks and praise to God with our whole life in faithful discipleship.

Yours in Christ's Service,
Pastor Linda Hanus