

News & Notes



**St. Paul Lutheran Church
5201 Galitz Street
Skokie, IL 60077-2737
(847)673-5030
www.stpaulskokie.org
office@stpaulskokie.org
The Rev. Matt Conrad, Pastor**

JANUARY 2015

VOL. 48, NO. 1

From the Pastor's Desk

Generous Giving

As I recall my days back in the seminary, I remember some wise words of wisdom that various professors shared with me. These important nuggets weren't found in a textbook, no, they were the day to day wisdom you get just from sitting at the feet of men who had been out in the parish and knew how church-life worked.

It was all shared tongue-in-cheek, but also with a healthy dose of reality. One nugget *was to always stay on the good side of the LWML group and the Altar Guild*. And that's the truth! We could list all manner of ways that "life" could be "bad" should a pastor have a falling out with either group!

Another nugget of wisdom was *never forget the offering!* The old saying is "where 2 or 3 Lutherans are gathered, there will be an offering!" There are times where I accidentally might miss a part of our Sunday Liturgy, but if I want to see if the elders and ushers are paying attention, all I have to do is skip the offering – and suddenly everyone's jumping up and down in the back of church! Ok, I'm kidding about those last few things, but the reality is that Christians have always made offerings a significant part of their worship. And the reality about our giving is that it's never been *just* about money. Our role as Christ-followers, from the very beginning of creation, was to be the managers of what God has given to us. And this covers everything. It covers our time – what we do with such a precious commodity that always seems to be running out. It covers how God has made us, gifted us, and wired us to enjoy certain things. Each and every one of us is different *and* a blessing to the Church. It covers how we spend our money and what priorities we set in our life together. As much as we don't always want to admit it, money too is a part of what God has given to us to carefully manage.

The Bible talks a lot about money and how we spend. Jesus spoke about money more than He spoke about Heaven and Hell. About 25% of the parables Jesus shared had to do with finances. Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, shared about the Christians of Macedonia and their giving beyond their own ability. He consequently encourages the Corinthians to be cheerful in their giving.

“Pastor Conrad, why all this talk about giving and money right now? I just gave at Christmas, and now I’m trying to figure out how to pay off all the giving I did for friends and relatives!” That’s a good question, and it’s probably best for us to talk about giving when all of us are already concerned about money in the first place! St Paul’s impact on the community and the world depends on the offerings of our members and friends. The Bible speaks about how that worked in the early Church as Christians supported the ministries of one another – and that’s how it works today. And even in hard times, even when we’re anxious about our finances, the Kingdom of God cannot wait us to feel comfortable or be in a giving mood. We continue to give because that’s a part of our worship of a God who is the first, great Giver.

I bring this up right now because soon you’re going to hear more about giving – in the bulletin, in announcements, from the pulpit. At some point you’re going to hear about making a pledge. As you all probably noticed this past Christmas, work on the roof has already begun – and that’s a large financial, but necessary, expense. Some of the things we’ve pushed to the backburner years and years ago are catching up with us, and there are significant costs associated with these things as we move forward. But to be good managers of what we’ve been given it is our responsibility to take care of those blessings.

For all your giving in the past to support St Paul, thank you! In fact, as we look forward to paying off our roof, someone has already stepped forward to match our giving dollar for dollar, up to a certain amount – what a blessing (and we’ll have more details soon!) Others of you are working on some creative ways we have for fundraising. Generosity is already in the work! As we grow in how we use God’s things for God’s purposes, we’ll also realize that any goals we set are just minimums – you can’t

out give God, the FIRST One who gave to us! So as we continue to take steps to be free from debts, see this also as an opportunity to be more involved in ministry.

Brothers and sisters, it's a new year, and we have great opportunities in front of us. Let us not grow weary of doing good. Sometimes that work involves evaluating what we're doing with what God has given us. Let's search our hearts as we consider what it means to be a manager of God's blessings to us. And pray with me about how our giving is part of our act of worship.

Happy New Year!

Rev Matt Conrad

Pastor Conrad

CHURCH NEWS



VOTERS' MEETING: A voters' meeting will be held following the 10:30 service on January 25th for the purpose of electing new officers and board members for 2015. Mark your calendar and plan to attend!

THE CLOTHING CENTER would like to say a very special thank you to the secret angel who left a very generous gift at our door. Words cannot explain our gratitude and thanks. Know that your beautiful gesture will put smiles on the faces of many children in our surrounding community. Thanks from the bottom of our hearts.



DELIVERY TO UPTOWN MINISTRY: In early December, Mary & Gerry Bonkoske and I delivered boxes of toiletries (tooth paste/brushes, shampoo, conditioner, lotion, deodorant, etc.) to the Chicago Uptown Ministry. This delivery is a testament to all of

those who brought in their unused toiletries, those who asked their physicians to donate something and to Joanie and her Bible study group who in total helped us collect several boxes of these much needed supplies. Please continue to repeat this collection in the new year. Bring your toiletries to church with you on Sundays and we will get it to the collection box in the church basement. LWML would like to make this a congregational mission year after year. **We thank you!** Penny Luytgarden

OFFICIAL ACTS

Baptism: 12/21: Emerson Jay Taber



ATTENDANCE

| | <u>8:00 am</u> | <u>10:30 am</u> |
|-------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| December 7 | 24 | 81 |
| December 14 | 21 | 111 |
| December 21 | 35 | 147 |
| December 28 | 25 | 54 |

SPECIAL SERVICES

Midweek Advent:

12/3: 28

12/10: 20

12/17: 22

German service: 52

Christmas Eve:

4:00 pm: 50

7:00 pm: 85

11:00 pm: 120

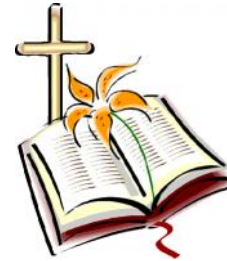
Christmas Day: 48



THE FOLLOWING MEMORIALS WERE RECEIVED IN THE CHURCH OFFICE:

In memory of Frieda Wirtz

Betty Knaus and Family
Steven & Diana Cote



In memory of Paul Krueger

Dolores Krueger & Elaine Absalom

In memory of Alice Rath & David Rath

Carl & Loretta Rath

In memory of Janice Young

Carol & Bill Peterson
Arnold & Elayne Jacobs
Debra Suriano
Sallyann Okuno Bacchiere

In memory of Ralph Kasten

Karen Kasten

In memory of Ida & Richard Johnson and Ralph & Lois Kasten

Carol Barrett

ST. PAUL FOUNDATION FUND HONOR ROLL OF DONORS:

In memory of Alice Rath & David Rath

Carl & Loretta Rath



ST. PAUL GIVING & DEBT

Fiscal Year – June 1, 2014 to May 31, 2015
Month Ending – November 30, 2014

Member Contributions + Loose Offerings

| | |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| Needed total per 2014/2015 budget | \$ 237,000 |
| Needed giving each month | 19,750 |
| Giving received this month | 20,085 |
| Giving needed so far this year | 118,500 |
| Actual giving so far this year | 109,526 |
| Variance to need – surplus/(deficit) | (8,974) |

| <u>Remaining Debts & Pay Down Progress</u> | | <u>Pay Down This Month **</u> |
|--|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| Mortgage (parsonage) @ 5.75% | \$ 72,606 | \$ (51) |
| Line of bank credit (LOC) @ 5% | 22,981 | \$ () |
| Bonds 50K @ 6%, 15K @ 6-1/2% | 65,000 | |
| Loan from Foundation Fund @ 0% * | 25,000 | |
| Loan from Schaefer Bequest @ 0% * | <u>25,000</u> | |
| Totals | \$ 210,587 | \$ (51) |

* Pay back promised when borrowed

** Members: To help pay down our debts, please use the Building Fund envelopes in your packet, or use a plain envelope. When using either envelope type, please mark the Envelope and your check: Debt Reduction Only.

January Birthdays

1/01 Stan McKinney
1/02 Valerie Meccia
1/04 Timothy Loftus
1/05 Christopher McKinney
1/05 Alison Finn
1/06 Thomas Gustafson
1/06 Eve Mason
1/07 William Fern
1/08 Hans Uritz
1/09 Robert Sakas
1/09 Mark Schiewe
1/15 Joanie McKinney
1/16 Henry Meinke
1/17 Richard Krier
1/22 Charles Buehner
1/23 Barbara Wolowicki
1/24 Myanna Conrad
1/24 Elizabeth Sellke
1/24 Hildegard Wegner
1/25 Isaiah Conrad
1/27 Gale Andersen
1/27 Marian Seibert
1/29 Lore Adam
1/29 Nancy Eck-Prinz
1/29 Elsie Maggio
1/31 Karen Ullberg




*Birthdays
of the Month*

