



The Pilot

St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran

**"JESUS, SAVIOR, PILOT ME
OVER LIFE'S TEMPESTUOUS SEA ...
CHART AND COMPASS COME FROM THEE:
JESUS, SAVIOR, PILOT ME."**

Volume 1, No. 7

December 2015

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From the Pastor:

"After that whole generation had been gathered to their fathers, another generation grew up, who knew neither the LORD nor what he had done for Israel. Then the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD and served the Baals. They forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of Egypt. They followed and worshiped various gods of the peoples around them. They provoked the LORD to anger because they forsook him and served Baal and the Ashtoreths." Judges 2:10-13

(From WELS DAILY DEVOTION – December 5, 2015)

God Provided a Savior—Born For All Generations

Picture your congregation on Christmas Day, a hundred years in the future. Imagine your church on that day standing empty. Nobody attends to hear that a Savior has been born. Not a soul lifts up his voice to sing "Joy to the world, the Lord is come!" Why? Nobody knows the Lord Jesus anymore. Another god has replaced him.

The Bible tells us that "Israel served the LORD throughout the lifetime of Joshua" (Joshua 24:31), but we read that the next generation forsook and forgot the Lord.

*(Continued on page 2) **Born for all generations***

New Year's Eve survey

Due to low attendance in past years and not having a New Year's Eve service last year, the Church Council would like to survey the members as to if they plan on attend should we have the service. So please contact Pastor Strong if you plan on attending if we have it. A decision will be made Sunday, December 20th.

Holy Communion

There has been discussion concerning having Holy Communion on the 5th Sunday of months that have a 5th Sunday. It is felt that we have it twice a month and if on the 5th Sunday, we then have it two Sundays in a row. For larger congregations, it may be more advantageous with more members taking communion. But for our smaller congregation, the Council feels that the twice a month can work well for our congregation even though it only happens a

few months during the year. So at this time we will suspend the communion on the 5th Sunday of a month. If you have concerns, you may contact one of the councilmen.

Kidz Korner

This is the title of our program where an adult can bring their children ages 18 months to 5 years to spend time learning God's Word, playing with others, snacking and doing crafts.

Kidz Korner will be held on the first and third Wednesdays of each month from 9 to 10 AM. No need to register. If you know of someone in that age group, encourage them to come and join the fun.

Post cards with information about this and also Christmas for Kids are available at church. You can take a couple and pass out to friends and neighbors.

(Continued from page 1) **Born for all generations**

While Baal and Ashtoreth might not be the gods of choice today, rest assured the devil continues to bring before us other appealing gods. These gods might be digitally mastered, visually enhanced, in surround-sound, loaded with megahertz, fuel-injected, paying high dividends, or in a picturesque neighborhood. Such gods demand our time and attention. They promise to bring fulfillment to our lives. They guarantee perfect contentment. But they never fully deliver.

When these gods enamor and ensnare us, we know our true God's reaction. He feels righteous anger. Our holy God can't tolerate sin in his presence. In his justice he must condemn it.

He did! He condemned all sin in his Son. He poured out his righteous anger on Jesus on whom the sins of the whole world were laid. God forsook his beloved Son on Calvary's cross for the innumerable times we have forsaken him. Because of Jesus' death, God does not count our sins against us. The Bible says, "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1).

This message of God's great love prompts us to discard worthless, worldly idols and cling to him alone who saves. It also motivates us to do the work God has placed us here to do—share his full and free salvation with the next generation. Then by grace on Christmas Day in all future years, the houses of the Lord will resound with singing, "Glory to God in the highest."

Prayer:

Fill me, Lord, with the joy of your salvation. And lead me to live for you in grateful response to your love. Put your word on my lips and help me share with others the good news that you are the Savior of all. Amen.

(This and other devotions are available online at: WhatAboutJesus.com. You can subscribe and get devotions brought to your inbox on a daily basis. You can also subscribe to daily devotions at this website. And there is a wealth of other materials to be found there.)

Why do you worship? Or why don't you?

As you read the previous devotion, think about how you were brought up. There are two types of Christians: ones that worship regularly as God commands and those that don't.

Concerning those that don't: Were you brought up in an unbelieving home? A home where going to church was non-existent or only on Christmas and Easter? A home where the Word of God was not mentioned? A home where one's wants were placed over what God wants? Could that all explain why we have less than 50% of our members attending worship regularly (not much different than the national average for Christian churches)?

Or is it that you had a very God-fearing family that did instill in you the blessing of worship but you rebelled? You listened to the world around you and decided in your heart that your parents were not right and that the devil and the world are right? Or maybe you decided that you could just keep excusing yourself and that God would be more than pleased with all your excuses for not worshiping. Or maybe you think that it isn't necessary to worship. Then re-read the devotion above. It is so sad when people make up excuses for not worshiping God.

The second type of Christians... those that do worship regularly. They aren't being "holier than thou." They aren't thinking that it will get them to the front of the

What kind of worshiper? (Continued on page 3)

Our stewardship summary:

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Year to date budget: | \$95,337.00 |
| Year to date offerings: | \$88,649.50 |
| Building Fund available funds: | \$162,000.00 (after final payment to architect) |

The Pilot is a monthly newsletter of St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church. Articles are to be submitted to the editor by the 10th of each month. Pastor Strong serves as editor. The Pilot serves to inform St. Paul members of the events that are taking place in our congregation. Keeping the communication lines open is very important. Your comments are welcomed. St. Paul Web Page location is www.stpaulgj.org. You may e-mail at pastorstrong@stpaulgj.org or church@stpaulgj.org

(Continued from page 2) *What kind of worshiper?*

line for entrance into heaven. They know they aren't perfect. But they do know that Jesus saved them from their sins and if it weren't for him, they would be lost eternally in hell. For that reason, there are so many reasons to worship the God that saved them for heaven. God deserves our presence in worship.

Worship means praise. Praise means telling others.

Worship is a means to tell others about the God that saved them. Worship isn't all about "what do I get out of it," but rather "what does God get out of it." What the worshiper gets out of it is a blessing from what God gets out of it. Huh?

Worship for the right reason and you will be blessed by God. Go to church and find out how God can give you those blessings. Read Hebrews 10:24-25.

So often I hear people who say that Sunday just wouldn't be the same if there weren't church to attend. (Others conveniently "forget" about church.)

Those that truly appreciate God love to be in his presence with fellow believers. They have learned the secret of the Third Commandment.

How you were brought up will be the measure you use for your children and grandchildren and future generations. Will our church be full or empty?

What type of worshiper are you? Find out on any day we have a worship service. Have a blessed Christmas.

Building Addition update

We continue to wait while the architect is finishing up the drawings for the fellowship hall addition. As soon as that is done we can seek bids on the project. We have about 4 different contractors that we will share bids with. As the end of the year comes, you may wish to consider how the Lord has blessed you throughout the year and make a donation either to the building fund or to our general fund. We are estimating that we may have to borrow about \$115,000, well below previous estimates. That would mean a mortgage of about \$750 per month. Right now we have donations coming in at about \$650 per month. So that would mean a modest increase in our general budget to service the debt.

But that remains to be seen until we get the bids.

The total amount that was pledged by members was \$48,500. Received to date is \$18,933.86. From those pledges, we are expecting the remainder of \$29,566.14 to be donated. There are many others who are also donating on a regular basis as we near the date of ground breaking and building. As one member put it, "We are moving forward." The community will see that and we ask that God bless our efforts.

Christmas Eve Service

Our Christmas Eve worship service will be held at 7 PM. The service will be called "Repeat the Sounding Joy." It will take us back to the favorite Christmas hymns and songs that many grew up with. The children of the congregation along with the Choir will once again tell of the birth of Jesus in song and Scripture.

Seen any angels recently?

At Christmas time angels seem to pop up in manger scenes and on top of Christmas trees. Of course, they aren't flesh and blood angels. Nor have they popped down from heaven for a brief visit during this time of year... or do they?

What do you really know about angels? After Christmas, our Sunday Bible Class will look at the topic of angels. Join us as we delve into God's heavenly creatures who work a lot on this earth.

Mission Offerings

As 2015 draws to a close we are short the amount we would like to send to Missions. We will still need \$4,500 to send to the WELS as we support the work of training called workers, opening and maintaining missions both in the U.S. and around the world. Consider making an extra donation in your offerings to help us reach our goal... and end up in the black for our general offerings.

ST. PAUL IS A PART OF THE
WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD.

www.wels.net



Stewardship – December 2015

Members of St. Paul,

In the past newsletters there have been articles dealing with stewardship and how we can best serve the Lord in our lives with the possessions he has entrusted to us. The Church Council will be preparing a preliminary budget for 2016 and will be looking closely at the costs that we incur and how we can utilize the offerings in service to the Lord.

The attached sheet should be returned as soon as possible so that we can adjust our orders for the future.

The offering envelopes are utilized for the purpose of record-keeping between the church and the member. It is a convenient way to track your own giving on a week by week basis as the church can record and give you a summary.

But for some, that isn't important. You may be keeping track on your own and that is fine. If you do not wish to use your envelopes and just like to put your cash or check into the collection plate, then we can save on the cost of extra offering envelopes that get unused. Just check "no" to not receive offering envelopes or "yes" to continue to receive offering envelopes.

The Meditations is the daily devotional booklet that our church subscribes to for our members. It has wonderful devotions and also a schedule for reading the entire Bible over a three year period. At the present time, the majority of sermons follow the weekly Scripture readings. So you hear the sermon on Sunday and then review through the Meditations for the week.

If you have your own daily devotionals and wish not to utilize the Meditations, make that known on the attached sheet.

And if you would like more than one copy... to give to someone close to you to use, make that known on the sheet as well.

Forward in Christ is the WELS magazine that keeps our members apprised with what is going on in the Synod. There are devotions, first person stories, news about other churches in the U.S. and around the world, mission news, youth organization news, and other inspirational articles. Please check if you would like to continue to receive this or not.

(The Meditations and the Forward in Christ, they will be placed in your information boxes for you to pick up when they become available. The offering envelopes will be placed in your information boxes before the end of December.)

Giving electronically. In our modern technology age we are able to pay bills and order products through the internet. Many have automatic payments taken out of checking and savings accounts. It is a matter of convenience. We can do the same for church offerings. You can change the amount and the frequency of offerings by contacting the church secretary a week in advance. It is simple to use and is a way of systematic first-fruit giving. Enclosed is a form for making this possible. As an added benefit, it means less time for our financial people to count money, it is more secure than a check and you don't need to have the offering envelopes to use this service.

On Sunday morning, during the pastor's prayer, a shrill whistle came from a young boy sitting in a pew. His mother was horrified and quickly hushed him into silence. After church, the mother asked, "Whatever possessed you to make such a terrible noise in church?" "Well," he answered, "I've been asking God to teach me to whistle.....and just then, He did!"

~Thanks to Maureen Worland for submission

Mission news

"Whoever follows me . . . will have the light of the life." (John 8: 12)

The November 26th devotion in *Meditations* encouraged readers to "support mission work in places you cannot go". The special prayer section of this booklet included an entry for the missionaries who follow God's command and take His word into home and world mission fields. Many churches host annual Mission Festivals. We are often encouraged to remember our missionaries in prayer and to financially support mission efforts.

Have you ever wondered who these people are and how God is blessing their work? Do you find it easier to pray for someone if you know something about them and their needs? In 2016, *The Pilot* will focus on getting to know some of the people God has sent to serve Him.

Anyone who has ever talked to a missionary family or corresponded with one will tell you that each contact always ends with prayer requests. As Christians we all know the **power of prayer!** With this in mind, the monthly articles will be entitled "**Remember to Pray For...**". In January, the focus will be on Pastor Kent A. Reeder who is shepherding a flock in Rock Hill, S.C. Watch for his story and in the meantime please pray that the light of Jesus' love will shine into the darkest of hearts!

Donation acknowledgments

Sometimes members pay for services or items that benefit the church that would normally be in the budget. It may be repair bills or paying for office supplies, etc. One way to get credit on taxes is to submit the invoice/bill and get reimbursed. This way we get a true cost of operating the church. When you are reimbursed, you can then donate it back to church as an over and above donation apart from your regular giving. When someone pays for the services or items

Thanks to Carol Rice

Carol will be retiring from being the church office secretary and book keeper. She will still help as needed but will be handing over the reigns to Danyelle Wright. Along with this change in personnel, we will change the title to better reflect the position. This position will be called, "Office manager." That will distinguish that position from the Church Secretary, a position on our Council.

Make sure to say thank you to Carol when you see her. She will remain through the end of the year to help get the year end work done.

and it doesn't go through the church books, it can skew the actual costs of running the church. So the best way is to submit, get reimbursed, then donate back. This is for items and services that would normally appear on the budget.

If you are donating something that is above and beyond the budget (i.e. special gift to the church that would not be considered a budget item), then we do have another way that can be used. That is to ask for a "donation acknowledgment form." You can then fill in the information for your donation, attach a copy of the invoice/bill, and then keep with your tax records for tax purposes.

Check in the office for these forms. Have them signed by a Councilman or the pastor and it will meet the IRS requirements for donation purposes.

Christmas for Kids

On Saturday, December 19, we will be holding a one day Vacation Bible School type event called "Christmas for Kids." It will be held from 1 PM to 4 PM. We will invite the community to drop off their children ages 3 through 5th Grade. Then the parents can do their last minute shopping without the help of their children.

Make sure to sign up your children so they can interact with all the other children in the community. We will be looking for volunteers to help out. Contact Pastor Strong if you would like to help in some capacity.





St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church

632 26 1/2 Road
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Address Service Requested



Located on the corner of
26 1/2 Road and Horizon Drive

Church Office: 970-243-3626
Pastor's Cell: 612-709-4772
Website: www.stpaulgj.org
Email: church@stpaulgj.org

Worship Services:
Sunday mornings 9:00 AM
Fellowship: 10:00 AM
Sunday School: 10:15 AM
Bible Study: 10:30 AM

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Click on the QR code with
your smartphone/tablet for
our website access