



# 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 2, No. 8-9

January-February, 2017

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## From the Pastor:

(An online article from WELS Daily Devotion for January 24)

## The Most Important Part of Church

*"I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought. My brothers, some from Chloe's household have informed me that there are quarrels among you. What I mean is this: One of you says, "I follow Paul"; another, "I follow Apollos"; another, "I follow Cephas"; still another, "I follow Christ." Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into the name of Paul? I am thankful that I did not baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius, so no one can say that you were baptized into my name. (Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I don't remember if I baptized*

*Most Important( Continued on page 2)*

## Wednesday Bible Study

Our Wednesday evening Bible Study will recess when Ash Wednesday starts the Lenten Season. Then we will start up again after Easter.

## Book of Revelation

On February 26 we will start our study of the Book of Revelation in our Sunday Bible Class. There is a lot of material that God provides about the times we are living in. There is a lot of misunderstanding of the visions of John that leads people to put false hope in the future. Why should that matter to you? Come and learn.

## Lenten Schedule

It won't be long and we will be in the Lenten season. Ash Wednesday takes place on March 1, 2017. We will once again have a Soup Supper at 6:00 PM and worship service at 7:00 PM. Check the bulletin board for sign up sheets if you would like to donate the soup or the crackers and bread and desserts for each of the Wednesday evenings.

Pastor Matthew Frey from Living Word Lutheran in Montrose will exchange pulpits with Pastor Strong during these worship services. The theme and schedule for the Lenten services will be coming in mid-February.

## Mission Training

This year The Pilot will take a look at mission training throughout the world. We begin with an account from Darin Warnecke, a 2014 Martin Luther College Summer Student Assistant who served in Michigan.

The numerous times I've heard Jesus say, "Go into the world," I have often thought of Africa, Mexico, or another distant land. So often I've neglected to see the mission field God has placed me in—the world around me. This became clear to me as I served at Crown of Life in Cadillac, Michigan. I had foolishly thought Alaska or Louisiana would be better, but God's better plan was to open my eyes to the world of Cadillac.

Working in and with home mission congregations opens our eyes to the mission

*Missions (Continued on page 4)*

(Continued from page 1) **Most Important**  
anyone else.) For Christ did not send me to baptize,  
but to preach the gospel—not with words of human  
wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its  
power. 1 Corinthians 1:10-17

### The Most Important Part of Church

If you interviewed people on the street, how would they finish this sentence?

The most important part of church is . . .

We would probably get a lot of different answers. The most important part of church is the music, the pastor, the friendliness of the people, the length of the sermon, or even how clean the restrooms are!

God's missionary, Paul, had written to Christians in Corinth, Greece, around 50 AD. Even back then they were arguing about which pastor was better—Paul, Apollos, or Cephas. Guess how they would have answered the question, "What's the most important part of church?"

Paul didn't want them fighting over pastors, because the person in the pulpit is not the most important part of church. Music, style of worship, liturgy, personalities, and friendliness are all important, but they are not the most important part of church. Jesus Christ had sent Paul to preach the gospel. The gospel is the message that we are people broken by

the evil that lives in our hearts. Jesus Christ died on a cross to take away our guilt and sin so God would never punish us. This simple message is the most important part of church. The gospel is the heart of the Bible. The gospel is the foundation and source of our life with God.

While the important blessings of personalities, friendliness, and music can encourage or discourage your church attendance, make the most important blessing your top priority. Go to a church that proclaims the gospel of Jesus without adding their own ideas into the mix. When you find a church that clearly and completely teaches the truth that Jesus Christ died for you, you are in a place where the gospel will fill you with spiritual life, forgiveness, and joy. The gospel is the most important part of church!

#### Prayer:

Jesus, in your love give me the most important blessing in a church—the good news that you died for me. Amen

The following is added material about the importance of a church family that I ran across.

#### 4 REASONS ATTENDING CHURCH IS A MUST

##### 1. God says so.

God tells us in his Word to "*not give up meeting*

*Most Important* (Continued on page 3)

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## Ladies' Fellowship

*"To share the good news of Jesus Christ at home and around the world through support of mission work, outreach, prayer, fellowship and love."*

#### NOTICE:

The March Food collection will be held March 5<sup>th</sup>!

**"Serve one another in love."**

*Galatians 5:13*

Ladies' Fellowship truly lives its mission! This month we are looking at ways in which our group has helped the St. Paul congregation over the years.

We purchased the acolyte robes, the pew pads, and the fabric for new Christmas altar paraments. (Dori Wugazzer and Dorothy Hessler then made the beautiful altar decorations!). We helped the church when it could not meet its mission obligation to the Synod and purchased numerous supplies for the kitchen. We assisted many members who found themselves in need. (The youngest son of one of our members had

to go to Denver Children's Hospital due to a deformed heart. There were three other boys at home and the family was having difficulty handling many serious issues. The donation given by Ladies' Fellowship arrived just as the family received a letter demanding payment of an outstanding bill. Our check was just enough to cover that existing debt! Praise to God who knows our every need!) The group sponsored a number of the children in our congregation so that they could attend Rocky Mountain Christian Camp. We supported Precious Lambs Christian Preschool throughout its existence. We buy special books which are given to families on the day their child is baptized and we are now preparing gift bags for CMU students four times a year. (Carolyn Herscher is coordinating this program.)

Ladies' Fellowship "shares the good news of Jesus Christ at **home** and around the world **through support** of mission work, **outreach, prayer, fellowship and love**. This is our mission and each month we strive to work within its guidelines as we serve one another in love.

(Continued from page 2) **Most Important**

**together**” (Heb. 10:25). Paul even goes so far as to call the church the “bride of Christ.” If you love Jesus, you will love the things that he loves—and he loves the church like a husband loves his bride. The church is important to God, so it should be important to us. God didn’t call us to gather and worship to burden us, but to bless us. Church attendance can become one of the greatest blessings in you and your family’s life.

### **2. *Worshipping Jesus together is powerful.***

Jesus lives inside of us by his Spirit when we believe in him. This is a profoundly incredible truth! But there is also something biblically powerful about gathering together with other believers to worship. Jesus said, “Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them” (Matt. 18:20). So he not only lives in us by his Spirit, but he is in the “midst” of us when we gather to worship him.

### **3. *We need Christian community.***

All of us long for community and connection with others. God has given us this gift in gathering together for church, and in smaller groups in each other’s homes. It fulfills something inside of us to do life with, encourage and be authentically involved in each other’s lives.

Christian TV, podcasts, books and conferences are wonderful additions to our spiritual lives, but nothing can take the place of consistent Christian community through the local church.

### **4. *We grow more together than alone.***

It can be messy when we step into each other’s lives. We are all human, and no one is perfect. So it requires effort and intentionality and grace from God to do life together, even as believers. Gathering regularly with other believers becomes a refining process whereby we help each other, pray for each other and encourage each other to want to follow Christ more wholeheartedly. It is a truly-beautiful thing. Don’t let any excuses stand in the way of what you know God is calling you to do. God will strengthen you and empower you to do what he has called you to do. If you have encountered past wounds from leaders or from church members, I’m praying for you—that God would bring healing and grace to you as you seek to follow him and love his church. ready!” Whether you are an early-bird shopper or a last-minute panic buyer is not all that important. What does matter is how highly you value the birth of the Son of God as a human being. John the Baptist could be blunt and to the point: “*Prepare the way for the Lord; make straight paths for him*” (Matthew 3:3).

What does that “prepare the way” metaphor actually mean? Just this—that you reflect on your sinful condition, taking responsibility for all your rebellious thoughts, words, and deeds . . . that you welcome the Word that tells you of the miracle birth . . . and that

you believe with all your heart that Christ Jesus loves you personally.

## **Kitchen remodeling**

On February 14, the new cabinets will be installed. We also thank the Ledeburs for donating the new flooring for the kitchen. We give all glory to God for enabling us to do this project. Continue to contribute to the Building Fund to help pay off the loan. Our loan is presently about \$77,000.

The Council has authorized the release of monies that still remain in our Building Fund checking account to the Ladies’ Fellowship to purchase new appliances for the kitchen. We felt as long as we are redoing everything and the present appliances are older and would like other features, and we do have enough in the checking to cover the appliances, that we would go ahead and use those funds. The Ladies’ Fellowship can discuss at their next meeting.

## **New Carpeting and baseboards**

You will notice that carpeting has been replaced in the old part of the fellowship hall and all the way down through the classrooms and office. It matches the carpeting in the new addition. We thank Al and Lola Ledebur for their generous donation to make this happen.

## **Our Councilmen for 2017:**

Rod Christ - President  
Al Ledebur - Secretary  
Stan Blair – Treasurer  
Tom Bargsten – Financial Secretary  
Phil Wiechman - Elder  
Bob Graf - Elder  
Mike Radeck - Elder  
Justin Amdahl - Trustee  
Tom Bargsten - Trustee  
Jason Wilbur – Trustee  
Rod Christ - Education Committee Chair  
Bob Grafe - Evangelism Committee Chair  
Phil Wiechman - Stewardship Committee Chair

## **Family Tree pictures**

We are planning on putting up pictures of all of our members on the bulletin board in the hallway leading to the fellowship hall. The vision is to have a tree with branches where pictures will hang. The background should be something like a summer day with blue sky, sunshine, etc. If you would like to help with the project, please contact Pastor Strong.

(Continued from page 1) **Missions**

field in our communities. Cadillac is a mission field ripe for harvest. People are hurting and people are searching for answers. Praise God for the work already being done in Cadillac. Hearts are being changed and strengthened through the ministry at Crown of Life. Sing praise to God for he has done marvelous things! Pray that the Holy Spirit will have more opportunities for the gospel to work on hearts in and around Cadillac, Pray that the pastor and members at Crown of Life remain encouraged by and faithful to the gospel. Give thanks for the world God places you in and the mission field you can touch.

## New Members:

We welcome to our membership Kevin Schulz and Michaela Schaller (soon to be Mrs. Schutz). May God bless them in our midst and may they be blessed in their April wedding.



## Head Trustee

Justin Amdahl is willing to be the head trustee for this year. If you have anything you would like to see done around the church, please contact him. Or you can ask the pastor and he will pass it along to Justin. You may email Justin at: JustinAmdahl@honnen.com. Or you can call him. Since he works days it would be best to call him in the evening or leave a message.

## Church's name change

As the Church Extension Fund was doing research for our loan, it came to their attention that our church was dissolved in 1998 and re-incorporated in 2000. The name of our church previously had been "St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church". It was changed to "St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church—WELS". Since none of our legal documents were changed to the new name, we will be looking at getting it changed back to the previous name without the "WELS." Then we won't have to go through the long process of changing all of our other legal documents. If you might happen to know why it was changed, we are curious. Let pastor know if you have that knowledge.

## Sunday School

We have 8 student members of Sunday School status. There are a number of Sundays where there may be none or one or two in church on any given Sunday. This spring there will be 4 that will be confirmed and move on to Bible Study status. What can we do to make Sunday School more meaningful? Unless the parents are teaching their students at home the Word of God, Sunday School becomes the primary educational tool for our young people to learn and study the Word to prepare them for Catechism Class and the world.

Our Education Committee will be exploring how to make Sunday School more meaningful so that parents realize its importance.

## Who do you know?

Who do you know that could benefit from hearing the Word of God and you know they don't go to church and maybe even don't want to know God? If you are willing to share your faith with that person, then do so. Let them know

But if you are unsure of yourself as to how to present your faith to that person, may we suggest that you refer them to our Evangelism Committee? You could ask that person if it would be okay for our church to contact them. Then we would send someone to visit with them and share our faith with that person. Should you be inclined to do so, get their permission for us to talk to them and then contact the pastor to get the ball rolling.

## Lighting of crosses and flag

We are working at making our cross on the steeple brighter as well as putting a solar light on the new cross on our new addition. Thanks to Tom Bargsten for overseeing this project. We will also put a solar light at the base of the flag as right now the light shining on the flag would shine right into someone's room in the assisted living facility going up across the parking lot. Also, taking the present light down will draw one's attention to the steeple cross better.

The Pilot is a monthly newsletter of St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church. Articles are to be submitted to the editor by the 10<sup>th</sup> 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](http://www.stpaulgj.org). You may e-mail at [pastorstrong@stpaulgj.org](mailto:pastorstrong@stpaulgj.org) or [orchurch@stpaulgj.org](mailto:orchurch@stpaulgj.org)

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**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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