



THE EPISTLE

Volume 8 Issue 2

St Paul Lutheran Church

February 2009

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Thursday after Epiphany 4
January 29, 2009
Religion and the Internet

Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Someone once told me that the number one use of the Internet was for sex, and that the number two use was religion. While I cannot testify to the veracity of that claim, it certainly sounds like it could be true. The reality is, the internet is teeming with Christian resources, for information, devotion, reflection, and more. I thought I would share with you some of the resources that I find to be incredibly valuable. They are not all Lutheran, but after just coming through the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, some ecumenical exposure can be fruitful.

ELCA links:

The ELCA's website: <http://www.elca.org> – Here you can find many resources regarding local congregations, our governing structure, and even solid resources for individuals and congregations.

Our synod's website: <http://www.wv-wmd.org/> -- Information and resources related to life in our synod.

Lutheran resources:

The Lutheran: <http://www.thelutheran.org> – The monthly publication for the ELCA. Just in case you are out and about and don't have access to the print version, you can read this online.

A collection of Lutheran blogs: <http://www.ringsurf.com/ring/pastorhansen/> -- "blog" is short for weblog. Here on this list you will find a number of Lutherans, both clergy and laity, who are putting forward reflections on their life as it relates to their faith. Note: some are more active than others.

The Book of Concord: <http://www.bookofconcord.org/> -- The entire Book of Concord, that bastion of Lutheran confessional identity, the Small and Large Catechisms, the Augsburg Confession, and much, much more. This online version works with a slightly older translation, but is still readable.

The Lutheran Forum: <http://lutheranforum.org/> -- A mainstay among Lutheran journals, their website, while not putting their articles online, has some nice online contributions.

Other Resources:

The Text This Week: <http://www.textweek.com/> --A wonderfully organized site for folks looking for what the upcoming readings for the week are, and various resources that surround them.

The Christian Century: <http://www.christiancentury.org/> -- A very interesting publication examining the intersection of faith, politics and culture.

Sojourners: <http://www.sojo.net/> -- The publication of the evangelical Jim Wallis, a fascinating read with a heavy emphasis on social justice. You might not agree with all of its politics (it describes itself as progressive), but I think it will provoke you to looking more deeply into how your faith interacts with your life.

The Voice of the Martyrs: <http://www.persecution.com/> -- Are Christians persecuted for their faith? You bet they are. Check out VoM, and pray for our brothers and sisters whose lives are in danger for following Jesus.

The Ekklesia Project: <http://www.ekklesiaproject.org/> -- A community of subversive Christian friendship. Along with thought-provoking columns, there is active discussion on their online boards.

Beliefnet: <http://www.beliefnet.com/> -- Perhaps the largest website about all things religious. Various columnists write about religion across the board. This site is not all Christian, and some of the Christian voices are not orthodox, but again I find that examining other perspectives can make us clearer in our identity as orthodox, confessional, Lutheran Christians.

Finally, what if that number one use of the internet mentioned above is overwhelming your time online? Let me recommend <http://xxxchurch.com/> -- they, tongue-in-cheek, call themselves the #1 Christian porn site. They have a number of resources, articles, podcasts available for folks to use. Most helpful, I think, is their free utility X3 Watch, which monitors internet sites and sends questionable sites to an accountability partner. X3Watch is on all of my computers to remove any temptation. My wife and I laugh when some things pop up that just aren't problematic. Most recently a recipe I looked up on a food website was listed because it mentioned "chicken BREASTS." But that kind of program helps remind me that my web browsing is neither "private" nor removed from my faith in Jesus.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Brian

St. Paul Youth Group

FEB. 8TH NEXT MEETING: 5-7 PM



CONTINUE STUDY OF NEW ORLEANS CULTURE
MARDI GRAS GAMES, ACTIVITIES, FOODS

Make 'Service Day' shirts

Bring to Feb. 8 meeting:

LYO Registration forms + \$20.00 **due at Feb. 8 meeting.** See Debby or Kris for forms.

White/light color t-shirt

Feb. 20-21 (Fri-Sat): Empty Bowls Monongalia,

Peace Hall – St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church, Star City

Volunteer opportunities during set-up and meal service



Feb. 22 (Sun.) – After worship - **Spaghetti lunch and St. Paul shirt sale**

Proceeds benefit ELCA Youth Gathering Trip

Watch bulletin for more info!!



Feb. 27-Mar. 1: LYO Winter Weekend – Camp Hickory, MD

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

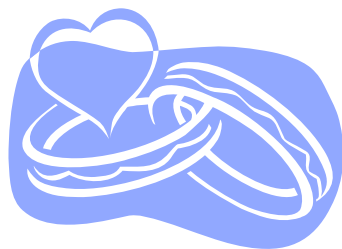
March 8th: Linus blanket making service activity. We will meet after church for a light lunch, followed by blanket making. Everyone is invited! Please bring 1 1/2 yard lengths of juvenile print fleece (50-60" wide) and sharp sewing scissors.

March 21st: Christian Education committee meeting, 10 AM.

There will be a Holy Saturday event for the Sunday School on April 11th.

Vacation Bible School is scheduled for July 12-16, 2009. Mark your calendars!!!!

If you have any questions about any of these events, please see Tamara Riegel. More information will be upcoming in future bulletins and newsletters.



ATTENTION MARRIED COUPLES: When is the last time you have done something to strengthen the most important relationship in your life? Lutheran Marriage Encounter has some new and exciting Western PA weekend locations for 2009 -- please check them out, and make plans to attend a weekend this year! These special and beautiful weekends run from Friday evening at 8 p.m. to Sunday afternoon at 5 p.m. and are designed to enrich ALL MARRIAGES. The spring weekend will be April 17-19 (the weekend after Easter) at the Olmstead Mansion and Retreat

Center in Ludlow, PA. This lovely facility is located 20 miles southeast of Warren, PA in the Allegheny National Forest. The fall weekends are: September 18-20 at the Sequanota Retreat Center in Jennerstown, PA, and October 16-18 at the Radisson Hotel in Sharon, PA -- just an hour north of Pittsburgh. All costs including housing, meals, and supplies are covered by a \$45.00 per couple registration fee plus a confidential contribution you are given the opportunity to make at the end of the weekend. Resolve to give your marriage the priority it deserves by attending a Marriage Encounter Weekend this year! Space is limited, so sign up for the spring weekend now! Go to the website: www.ilmeone.org for more information or to register online, or contact Western PA Chair couple Fred & Julie Schamber at: fjschamber@comcast.net or 724-325-3166.

OFFERING ENVELOPES: Please contact Sandy Price at 296-3568 or saprice@hsc.wvu.edu if you did not receive St. Paul envelopes for 2009 and you would like a box.

FROM THE CHAPEL:

We are already off and running for the second term. Here are some things that may be of interest to you.

1. This term, we're using Setting 3 of the *LBW* at the 7:00 PM Sunday mass. Most of the liturgical music of Setting 3 is drawn from Gregorian masses.
2. *Invocabit* (March 1), it's pilgrimage to Pitt for compline at Heinz Chapel.
3. The Lutheran Disaster Response Collegiate Corps plan to head back to the Gulf Coast for spring break (March 14-22). If you are interested in joining the team, contact the Director of Ops, Matt Madurski, at Disaster@LutheranMountaineer.org or call the office.
4. Let us know if you like Gregorian chant. The *Schola cantorum* will be working something up the Lenten-Holy Week cycle.

The Chapel is not for students only! We love it when people visit and join in. Schedule and descriptions of activities are posted on the website (www.LutheranMountaineer.org). You can also call (304-296-5388) and simply ask what we are doing.

**ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES
AT ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH
FEBURARY 25
7:00 AM & 12:00 (NOON) & 7:00 PM**



There are still many dates open on the flower chart in the narthex. If you would like to remember someone, commemorate a special occasion, or just give to the Glory of God, please make your selection. If you have any questions, please call the church office.

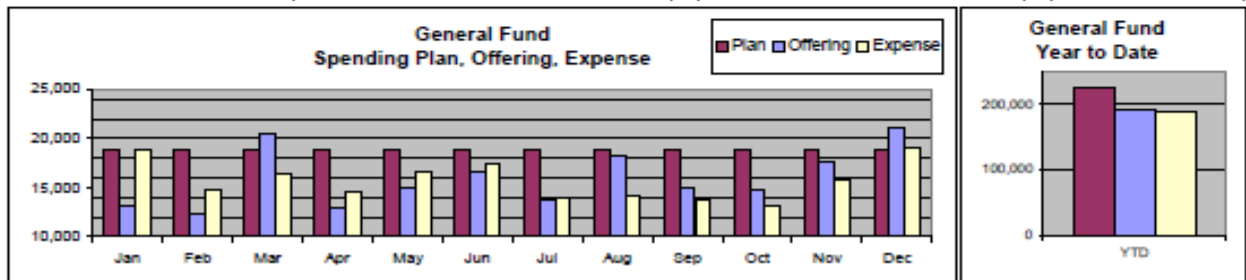
PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE, if you are using the church make sure that all doors are closed tightly and locked. We are still finding doors left unlocked or partly ajar. Your help is greatly appreciated.



Treasurer's Report

St Paul Lutheran Church Statement of Revenue and Expense with Spending Plan

December 2008	December				Year to Date			Year to Date	
	General Fund	Spending Plan	+/- of Plan Rec'd-Spent	% of Plan Rec'd-Spent	General Fund to Date	Total Plan to Date	% of Plan Rec'd-Spent	Restricted Fund	Total Funds to Date
Support and Revenue									
Contributions	21,075	18,823	2,262	112%	190,561	225,876	84%	190,561	190,561
Designated/Restricted								46,474	46,474
Total Assets	21,075	18,823	2,262	112%	190,561	225,876	84%	48,474	237,934
Expenses									
Designated/Restricted		245				4,224		40,966	40,966
Congregational Council	0	0			789	0		0	0
Benevolences	6,195	3,154	3,041	196%	28,478	39,748	72%	0	28,478
Church Mortgage	568	616	(48)	0%	6,839	7,392	93%	0	6,839
Committee - Christian Education	132	350	(218)	38%	2,458	5,600	44%	0	2,458
Committee - Fellowship	9	79	(70)	11%	484	1,255	39%	0	484
Committee - Staff Support	0	0	0	0%	26	30	88%	0	26
Committee - Outreach	89	163	(73)	55%	2,368	2,350	101%	0	2,368
Committee - Property	0	325	(326)	0%	1,060	3,900	27%	0	1,060
Committee - Resource	602	0	602	0%	1,180	200	590%	0	1,180
Committee - Stewardship	0	0	0	0%	0	100	0%	0	0
Committee - Worship & Music	551	750	(199)	73%	5,655	6,692	85%	0	5,655
Insurance	0	272	(272)	0%	3,565	3,760	95%	0	3,565
Building Operation	1,191	2,087	(896)	57%	20,117	26,148	77%	0	20,117
Office Operation	630	582	48	108%	5,959	6,984	85%	0	5,959
Parish Communications	175	185	(10)	95%	1,918	2,270	84%	0	1,918
Payroll	8,975	9,335	(380)	96%	107,146	112,017	96%	0	107,146
Total Expenses	18,118	18,143	873	106%	188,043	222,870	84%	40,966	228,220
Excess of Support and Revenue Over Expenses	1,959	680	1,278		2,518	3,206		5,507	8,814



Two Options for Today's Parishioners:

NEW - Electronic Giving Program

Traditional - Parish Envelope Program

A New Way to Give

Our church is embracing a giving option that may be more convenient for many of our parishioners - Electronic Giving. Beginning in January, this new giving option will work in the same manner as mortgages, loans payments, or insurance premiums that are automatically withdrawn from your checking or savings account.

To sign up for this new giving option and have your donations transferred electronically to the church account on a regular basis, please fill out an authorization form and return it to the church office. You choose the donation frequency (weekly or monthly) and the donation amount for each fund you wish to support.

Important Benefits of Electronic Giving

Electronic Giving makes life easier for you and yields very significant benefits for our church.

Benefits for You:

- The satisfaction of giving to God first
- Easier to fulfill stewardship commitments
- Strengthens participation and support in the church

- Allows you to contribute even when you're away
- Easier personal budgeting
- More secure than bringing cash or checks to church

Benefits for our Church:

- Cultivates consistent giving
- More predictable cash flow for better planning
- Less work for office staff
- Secure and easy cash maintenance

Traditional Choices Remain

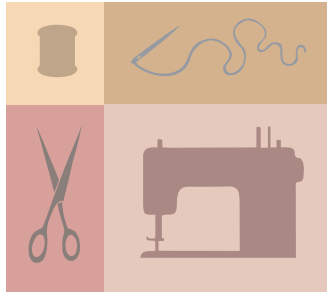
All registered parishioners will continue to receive envelopes, including envelopes for special collections for a variety of needs. Parish collections will be taken each week as usual. Participants in the Electronic Giving program are asked to mark their envelopes "EFT" and place them in the collection basket.

If you do not currently use envelopes, please consider participating in either our envelope program or the Electronic Giving program. Our parish needs your consistent support.

News from Council

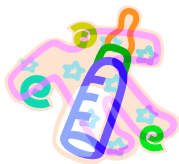
The St. Paul Congregational Council met Thursday, January 8th, and we wish to share some of the highlights with you.

- December was a good month for giving. We had an excess of offering over expenses for the month. Council has agreed to send a check to the Synod in the amount of \$3,600.
- January 18th there was a Congregational Meeting following the morning service. Committee reports for the year 2008 were presented. Tamara Riegel, Misti Bartlett, and LuAnn Hartley were reelected to serve as members of council for three more years.
- Council has been asked to look into the Scrip Program. This program is a fund raising program for non-profit organization members to purchase scrip (gift cards) for everyday expenses. Members purchase the scrip and St. Paul would earn a percentage of each dollar of scrip purchased. If anyone would be interested in organizing and being in charge of this program, or if there are any questions, please see Connie Toffle.



FROM THE PIECEMAKERS: Not much news from the Piecemakers this month. We took a long Christmas break and because of that and the cold weather we are a little bit behind right now. We could really use a little bit more help. One does not need experience for our kind of quilting. Of course, we would not turn down someone with sewing experience. We have a few quilts ready to take to the warehouse in New Windsor, Maryland. If anyone would be going in the direction of Frederick or Baltimore and had some extra time, we would like for them to take some of our quilts. It would be a great help and very much appreciated. We hope everyone had a nice Christmas and we wish you God's blessings for this new year.....The Piecemakers

WELCA NEWS: There will be a WELCA meeting on February 11th at 2:00 PM in the church lounge. We would like to encourage all ladies of the church to attend this meeting. Donna Ford-Werntz will be presenting the Bible lesson for this month. If you have any questions about this wonderful group, please see Kay VandenBosche or call the church office.



THANK YOU FOR THE BABY ITEMS FOR BRITHRIGHT

The Sunday School would like to thank everyone that contributed to the collection of baby items for Birthright. The mothers and babies in need will surely benefit from our generosity!! Again, thank you for your help!!

THE GREEN CORNER



Since the 1890's when John Muir founded the Sierra Club, and the 1960's when Rachel Carson wrote 'Silent Spring', environmental groups fighting narrow private interests on behalf of the populace (including unborns) have been largely white, middle class, middle aged, and higher income. (Findings from Earth Justice, a nonprofit.)

The most recent green publication, however, includes a wider audience, the poorest people as well as the richest—the street rap and the elite rap. Van Jones addresses the economy and climate change crisis with Green Collar Economy: How one solution can fix two problems. The book is highly endorsed by such illuminaire as talk show host, Travis Smiley, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, journalist Thomas Friedman, Dena of Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies.

Green jobs can incorporate the disadvantages and chronically unemployed because a green economy is not just about re-claiming thrown away stuff. It's about re-claiming thrown away communities. His vision and message is so mesmerizing that he was featured speaker at the Center for American Progress in Washington, DC, a think tank headed by John Podesta, who also headed Obama's Transition Team. People stand in halls to hear him and from this 'elite rap' he is just as popular with his 'street rap' when addressing high school dropouts at New Bedford, MA. Soon those, youthful skeptics leaned forward from their slouched seats and found this man talking their language, instilling reality rap for a future needing their passive talents.

Whether skeptics of finance or skeptics of street gangs, Jones converts the complexities of prose to natural conversation and the message that 'something bad has to happen before something really good can happen' is convincing enough to stimulate action. To the business or government that says 'We can't afford to do it' it becomes 'We can't afford NOT to do it.'

His Green For All organization is staffed and operating on a 4 million budget. As a result of Green Build Trade Shows, nearly a thousand people—architects, engineers, construction managers, city planners gather to hear him speak from new jobs to upgrading the Nation's Electrical Grid. Wind turbine power in the Midwest transported to the northeast, solar power in the South to become affordable roof panels. His audience is wide enough to encompass not only U.S. entire populace, but the global community.

The crisis on Wall Street, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, global unemployment and urban street gangs—all under the umbrella of energy supply. Someone's going to profit from new energy technology, why shouldn't we take the lead? (For detailed review of book, see The New Yorker, 1/12/09.)

That is the question: Co-existence or No-existence?

Prayer Corner

One of the most important things we can do for others is to pray for them, not just generally, but especially for particular needs and interests that they have. . . "The great intercessors remain the men and women of secret influence in all communities, and to be mentioned in their prayers is incomparably more enriching than to be mentioned in their wills. (W.E. Sangster)

Please pray for those in need. We ask you to include:

Illness

Lois Kleeb
Ron Fortney
Madge Hall
Jared Schreiman
Phyllis Henry
Jan Green
Jen Nestor
Fred Stouffer
Bob Snyder
Alana Mears
Karen Ford
Norma Gnegy
Jeffrey Cheney
Linda & Kristen Kleeb
Tom & Betty Kelso
Phil Quarrier
Philip Smith
Ron Fortney
Charlie Wodzinski
Wil Gladfelter
Ann Cloonan
Dorothy Hess
Nina Brand
Carolyn Walters
Joni Roh
Laura Bender
Florence Merow

Home Bound

Mary Hutchinson
James Sharkey
Virginia Sweitzer
Rilla Tonon

Grief

The family of:

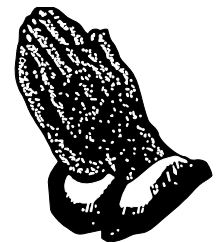
Recuperation Active Duty

Sierra Gabbert
Rob Walters
Brian Fox
Jason Glass

Wedding

Family Concerns

St. Mark's Lutheran
Clarksburg, WV
Grace Lutheran
Fairmont, WV



SERVING ST. PAUL February 2009	LAY ASSISTANTS	LECTORS	ACOLYTE-CRUCIFER	USHERS	NURSERY WORKERS	COUNTERS
1st 10:00 AM	M. Haas	S. Rizzo	E. Graham A. Grosso	C. Henry ML Cushing L & L Paulson	M. Bott-Hansmann McCulla Family	S. Price L. Springer
8th 10:00 AM	D. Borrelli	G. Makela	K. Custer E. Custer	P. Smith L. Springer T & F Potter	D. Ford-Werntz J. Graham	C. Henry S. Gabbert
15th 10:00 AM	J. Lee	B. Schreiman	M. Bott-Hansmann AJ Bartlett	S. Lynch S. Armstrong B & J Schreiman	K. Custer R. Toffle	L. Paulson LA Hartley
22nd 10:00 AM	S. Woodruff	S. Woodruff	E. Stiles E. Stiles	E. Graham S. Bartlett S & C Custer	A. Grosso E. Sampson	D. Borrelli M. Bartlett
25th Ash Wednesday 7:00 AM 12 Noon 7:00 PM	D. Borrelli M. Haas J. Lee	— — G. Groce	— — J. Borrelli P. Cushing	— — ML Cushing T. Riegel	— — J. Graham	

If you are unable to serve please find your own replacement. Thank you!

February 2009

Monthly Planner

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Service 11:45 AM Confirmation Class	2	3 10:00 AM Bible Study 7:30 PM Jesus Over Java	4 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	5	6 10:00 AM Piece makers	7
8 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Service	9	10 10:00 AM Bible Study 7:30 PM Jesus Over Java	11 2:00 PM WELCA 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	12 7:00 PM Council Meeting	13 10:00 AM Piece makers	14
15 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Service 11:45 AM Confirmation Class	16 7:00 PM Worship & Music Committee	17 10:00 AM Bible Study 7:30 PM Jesus Over Java	18 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	19	20 10:00 AM Piece makers	21 Circle of Friends
22 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Service Circle of Friends	23 8:00 AM LMM (Shoney's)	24 10:00 AM Bible Study 6:00 PM Shrove Dinner	25 7:00 AM Service 12:00 PM Service 7:00 PM Service Ash Wednesday Choir Rehearsal	26	27 10:00 AM Piece makers	28

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
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31						

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MORGANTOWN, WV 26505
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The **Epistle** is a publication from:
St. Paul Lutheran Church, Morgantown, WV
Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 9:00–2:00
Friday 9:00–12:00
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