



# THE EPISTLE

Volume 8 Issue 5

St Paul Lutheran Church

May 2009

## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Wednesday after Easter 3  
April 29, 2009  
*Why we do what we do!*

Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Over a year ago, the bishop asked a handful of pastors in this synod to be part of a special program happening throughout the synods that make up Region Eight of the ELCA. This program has been rooted in raising up leaders whose outlook is decidedly missional. Of course, most of us who were chosen were already doing missional things anyway. But this program has involved small regional groupings of pastors called cohorts gathering for discussion and reflection, as well as events at the seminary at Gettysburg where we have heard a few very interesting speakers and read some very interesting books. Overall the experience has been positive and energizing, mainly because I have been given some new perspective.

I suppose I understood, in theory at any rate, that there was no one model of a successful congregation. However for all practical purposes, I think I have always fell for that image the large congregation with the membership of thousands, or high hundreds. The congregation would be bustling with programs and events, groups of all sorts, doing this, that and the other... and yet, I have begun to appreciate that a FAITHFUL (distinct from successful) congregation can appear very different from other faithful congregations because of their context. Basically there is no one right way to be the church.

In her recent book, *Christianity For the Rest of Us: How the Neighborhood Church Is Transforming the Faith*, Diana Butler Bass points out that while the media and much of the conventional wisdom in churchy circles say that the only churches that can grow are the megachurches and churches that hold very conservative stances, there are mainline Protestant congregations that are thriving. Why? One Lutheran pastor comments in the Introduction, that it's not "rocket science... You preach the gospel, offer hospitality and pay attention to worship and people's spiritual lives. Frankly, you take Christianity seriously as a way of life."<sup>1</sup> And that's the key. Christianity is a way of life. Being a follower of Jesus makes a difference in how we live.

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<sup>1</sup> Bass, *Christianity For the Rest of Us*, p. 7

Now some might say that Lutherans don't really live like there is a difference. We aren't prone to conversion experiences, although they are not completely unheard of. We are not typically found on street corners proselytizing or even gently rapping on doors in the neighborhood. But again, those are not necessarily the only ways to measure our commitment. Lutherans at St. Paul are interested in lots of things that bear witness to God's Kingdom. We feed the hungry. Despite being a liturgical tradition, we are rather flexible in our worship. Groups care for one another. We have an active prayer chain (note: if you ever desire to have someone, including yourself, put on the prayer chain, call the office). We diligently attend to the Sacraments. We have a vibrant educational ministry with people of all ages engaged in Sunday School, Confirmation, and bible study. We seek to give all of our money away from parking cars for outreach and supporting local charities. No matter what anyone says, this Lutheran congregation is definitely outwardly focused.

This focus has been cultivated here over decades. I continually think about our mission statement that we recite every Sunday. "We are children of God, called and sent by the Holy Spirit to love others as Christ loved us." This statement is nearly perfect. It is short, even my oldest had it memorized when he was four years old through our Learn By Heart program. It speaks of the Triune God's love for us and our response to it. I know, I know... some of you wish the statement read "as Christ loves us," rather than "as Christ loved us." Certainly Christ continues to come to us and love us even now, but as I reflected upon it, the way Christ loves us is shown perfectly in his action upon the cross. Even the continued outpouring of his own self in the Eucharist, where we are given his very body and blood, is intimately connected to the "night in which he was betrayed." So, say the statement however you want, loves, loved... either way it points to the Triune God's love for us, revealed most clearly in Jesus' life, death and resurrection.

So if we are focused outward, why do we keep hearing about mission? Well, we must always be strengthened and built up, continually reminded of our calling in the waters of baptism. Additionally, Lutherans are notoriously quiet. We might be engaged in these wonderful works of outreach and mission, but when it comes down to it, when asked why we do them, we either parrot back standard secular phrases, "We are just trying to make the world a better place" or "we are just trying to give back something to the community." Neither of which are bad or incorrect answers, but they could be aimed more directly to the heart of the matter; that is, Jesus' heart. Mentioning Jesus is not something Lutherans have traditionally done. I know it does happen. I have experienced it. But generally we come out of cultures and nations where we all have the same general knowledge of Christianity. That time is coming to a close. With fifty percent of people being unchurched or dechurched, with the vastly different number of cultures and religions who have become our neighbors and partners in our nation, we can no longer be quiet. We don't need to shout either, but we can converse and listen with others. And when we are asked why we do what we do? We can mention Jesus. "We do it because we want to love the world the way Jesus loved (or loves, either way) us." Then we open the doors to the conversation of faith and maybe invite them into our life of faith.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Brian



## **Elder Law Workshop**

**PLANNING FOR YOUR FAMILY FINANCIALLY AND PROTECTING YOUR ASSETS SHOULD NURSING HOME CARE BE REQUIRED**

**St. Paul Lutheran Church**

**May 16, 2009**

Registration begins at 12:30pm

\$5/person attending

**The presenter will be the Law Offices of Julie Gower Romain. Julie Gower Romain graduated from Alderson Broaddus College with her Bachelor of Science in Nursing. After working as Assistant Nurse Manager at Plano General Hospital in Plano, Texas, she attended the University of Texas at Austin, where she received her Law degree. She has worked as an Assistant Prosecuting Attorney for Marion County, as general counsel for a local hospital and worked as a staff attorney for West Virginia Senior Legal Aid. She opened the Law Office of Julie Gower Romain in 2001, in Fairmont, West Virginia, where her practice concentrates on Elder Law and Consumer Law. She is a member of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys and the National Academy of Consumer Advocates.**

## **Tour de Revs**

**On Tuesday, May 19, 2009, our very own Tour de Revs comes to the WV- W MD Synod. They are beginning their journey of 13,000 miles to raise awareness and \$5 million for ELCA World Hunger.**

**The bike is lubed up and the pastors are 'rarin' to go! The Tour de Revs begins its odyssey to raise million for ELCA World Hunger on May 13, 2009. Pastors Soltow, Schlak and Twedt are preparing both mentally and physically for their tour around the United States (including Alaska and Puerto Rico) to bear witness to the cause of hunger and sustainable, healthy lifestyles for all of us.**

**Please join the adventure by traveling to St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Clarksburg, WV for a late afternoon picnic (5:30pm) and celebration of their journey.**





Summer is just around the corner, and so is Vacation Bible School! This year we are planning a trip to ancient Rome, where we will discover what it was like to live in Rome during New Testament times.

At Rome VBS we will explore the Marketplace, visit the Apostle Paul where he is being held under house arrest, sneak to the cave where the Underground Church meets, taste the food and join in games and songs of Roman times.

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Rome VBS is for everyone between the ages of three and those who have completed fifth grade. The adventure begins Sunday, July 12<sup>th</sup> and continues through Thursday, July 16<sup>th</sup>. Sessions run from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM each day. On Monday through Thursday nights, a light supper will be provided for kids and families at 5:30. Please be sure to dress in play clothes and safe shoes.

This year, adults are invited to come along, visit for an hour or stay through the evening. Come one night or every night.

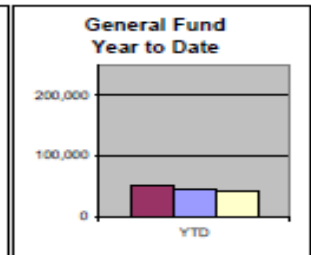
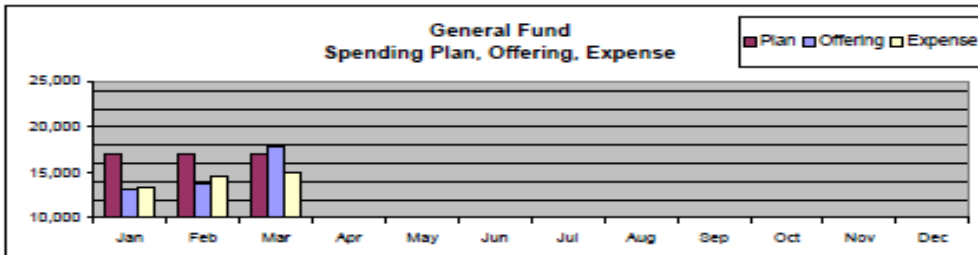
To register, pick up a form in the narthex after church and bring to the church office, or place in the Sunday offering plate. You may also call the church office for forms. For more information, contact Tamara Riegel at 296-1915 or [teriegel@verizon.net](mailto:teriegel@verizon.net)

Sponsor A Child: Ten dollars will purchase most of the supplies we need for one child to attend VBS. If you would like to sponsor a child, or even two or three, put an extra \$10 in the offering plate with a note on the memo line of the check, or on the outside of the envelope. Thank you!

# Treasurer's Report

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

March 2008	March				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
<b>Support and Revenue</b>									
Contributions	17,729	17,113	616	104%	44,584	51,339	87%	6,369	44,584
Designated/Restricted									6,369
<b>Total Assets</b>	17,729	17,113	616	104%	44,584	61,358	87%	8,388	60,863
<b>Expenses</b>									
Designated/Restricted	0	0				0		3,596	3,596
Congregational Council	0	0			11	0		0	0
Benevolence	2,700	2,600	100	104%	5,200	7,800	67%	0	5,200
Church Mortgage	568	580	(12)	0%	1,694	1,740	97%	0	1,694
Committee - Christian Education	46	137	(92)	33%	601	763	79%	0	601
Committee - Fellowship	151	79	72	191%	194	443	44%	0	194
Committee - Staff Support	0	0	0	0%	0	30	0%	0	0
Committee - Outreach	237	146	91	162%	621	998	62%	0	621
Committee - Property	0	167	(167)	0%	41	500	8%	0	41
Committee - Resource	0	0	0	0%	0	600	0%	0	0
Committee - Stewardship	0	0	0	0%	0	100	0%	0	0
Committee - Worship & Music	71	308	(237)	23%	406	1,663	24%	0	406
Insurance	0	301	(301)	0%	877	1,403	62%	0	877
Building Operation	1,501	1,841	(340)	82%	4,920	6,449	76%	0	4,920
Office Operation	462	384	78	120%	1,386	1,151	120%	0	1,386
Parish Communications	151	185	(34)	82%	516	605	85%	0	516
Payroll	9,097	9,102	(8)	100%	26,421	27,307	97%	0	26,421
<b>Total Expenses</b>	14,883	16,830	(847)	86%	42,886	61,662	89%	3,688	48,471
<b>Excess of Support and Revenue Over Expenses</b>	2,746	1,283	1,463		1,699	(213)		2,773	4,482



### 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, April 16th. Minutes from this meeting can be found in the council notebook in the narthex.



**FROM THE PIECEMAKERS:** So far we are having a very successful spring and making great progress with our quilting projects. Due to the generosity of our congregation and help from Thrivent we were able to purchase another modern sewing machine. We have mostly experienced quilters, assemblers and knotters in our group right now and they really deserve to have decent equipment to work with. It makes our job so much easier! We also got several sheets donated which we really needed. The staff at Lutheran World Relief is truly amazed as to how many quilts our small group has already sent to the warehouse in the last two years. We have a nice fellowship when we have our lunch break and also while we are working. If anyone would like to join us, we would welcome them to do so. We will most likely work part of the summer months. Over and over we feel that God has truly blessed our mission for making quilts for Lutheran World Relief!!

**WELCA NEWS:** The next meeting will be Wednesday, May 13, at 2:00 p.m. in the church lounge. All ladies of the congregation are invited to attend. See you there!!!



### ANOTHER GREAT WIN!!!!

Thanks to the matching funds from Thrivent for Lutherans and generous donations from you, we won the 1st Place Plaque again at the Alzheimer's walk. We received donations from 41 church families, 2 anonymous, and 15 friends of the church. Donations ranged from \$2 to \$300. It all adds up to \$2375 being sent to Thrivent in order to collect the \$300 being offered this year. (This amount is smaller this year due to the economy.) All donations are appreciated. Thank you.

In going through boxes of old papers recently, I found a page from a 1998 Lutheran Magazine in which some of our 1997 walk team was pictured. As a point of interest, I made an attachment of it to this year's walk poster in the narthex. Stop by and notice how our project has grown through the years financially but shrunk in numbers of walkers. — Kay VandenBosche

## **THE GREEN CORNER**

### **Accountability Questions**

#### U.S. Postal Service Begins E-Waste Recycling (World Watch, fall '08)

In an effort to improve electronics recycling, the U.S. Postal Service is developing a free national collection program for small electronic items. They're planning a program that provides courtesy envelopes with pre-paid postage for deposits of unwanted electronic e-waste in cell phones which contain bioaccumulative toxins. An International recycling company, Clover Technologies Group, processes the products in the U.S. and Mexico and resells them, as the first U.S. electronic recycling program. The EPA says we discard at least 2 million tons of e-waste annually and recycle less than 20 percent. The rest is shipped to 3rd world with no regard for those poor people sorting the garbage dumps. What isn't salvaged is burned or dumped in to bodies of water.

EPA hired an environmental consulting firm MBDC to ensure that the above waste would not go to developing countries. But the bigger questions one can ask are:

- If the waste doesn't go to developing countries, then where does it go?
- Cell phones (mailed at government expense) are small and countless, but what about other e-waste like TV's, computers, too big to ship?
- Why pay consultants or International Clover when Europe mandates that the manufacturers who profit from selling be also responsible for recycling? EU could give free advice.

#### Health Works

Nuts and seeds are high in phytosterols which lowers cholesterol naturally:

1. Sunflower seeds
2. Pistachios
3. Pumpkin seeds
4. Pine nuts
5. Flaxseeds, whole

—Consumer Reports on Health

#### Reading Green

GREEN BIBLE — Reviewed in Lutheran Woman

SMITHSONIAN — (Jan. 09) Check out from church office. Features our "wild, wonderful" West Virginia Mountaintop Removals.

## 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  
 Diane Craig  
 Becky Sias  
 James Martin  
 Elizabeth Martin  
 PJ Harmon  
 Steve Woodruff  
 Bob Snyder  
 Mildred Nicholson  
 Jim Leonard  
 Wil Gladfelter  
 Barbara Kervaski  
 Linda & Kristen Kleeb  
 Tom & Betty Kelso  
 Laura Bender  
 Philip Smith  
 Jennifer Roberts  
 June Ross  
 Ann Cloonan

### Home Bound

Rilla Tonon  
 James Sharkey

### Grief

The family of:  
 Virginia Sweitzer  
 Gary DeMoss  
 Carlton Davis

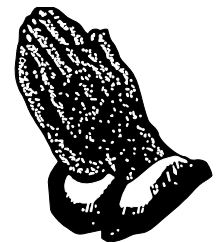
### Family Concerns

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

### Recuperation Active Duty

Sierra Gabbert  
 Rob Walters  
 Brian Fox  
 Jason Glass  
 Jay Pratt

### Wedding



SERVING ST. PAUL May 2009	LAY ASSISTANTS	LECTORS	ACOLYTE-CRUCIFER	USHERS	NURSERY WORKERS	COUNTERS
3rd 10:00 AM	J. Lee	T. Potter	J. Borrelli E. Graham	J & S McCulla L & L Paulson	M. Bott-Hansmann M. L. Bennett	C. Henry C. Toffle
10th 10:00 AM	M. Sampson	S. Rizzo	A. Grosso P. Cushing	E & C Melby ML Cushing E. Dillon	K. Custer McCulla Family	L. Paulson LA Hartley
17th 10:00 AM	D. Borrelli	G. Makela	K. Custer E. Custer	T & F Potter S. Lynch P. Smith	J. Graham Ford-Werntz Family	S. Price B. Graham
24th 10:00 AM	M. Haas	S. Woodruff	E. Stiles E. Stiles	S. Armstrong L. Springer LA Hartley S. Bartlett	A. Grosso S. Hollar	K. Powell T. Riegel
31st 10:00 AM	S. Woodruff	B. Schreiman	M. McCulla AJ Bartlett	B & J Schreiman G & K Kullman	K. Custer R. Toffle	D. Borrelli B. Schreiman

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

# May 2009 Monthly Planner

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					<b>1</b> 10:00 AM Piecemakers	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b> 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Service	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 10:00 AM Piecemakers	<b>9</b>
<b>10</b> 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Service	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> 2:00 PM WELCA 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>14</b> 7:00 PM Council Meeting	<b>15</b> 10:00 AM Piecemakers	<b>16</b> 1:00 PM Elder Law Workshop
<b>17</b> 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Service Confirmation Sunday	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 10:00 AM Bible Study 7:30 PM Jesus Over Java	<b>20</b> 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Service	<b>25</b> 8:00 AM LMM (Shoney's)	<b>26</b> 10:00 AM Bible Study 7:30 PM Jesus Over Java	<b>27</b> 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 10:00 AM Piecemakers	<b>30</b> Circle of Friends
<b>31</b> 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Service Circle of Friends						

June

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

April

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4		
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

ST PAUL LUTHERAN  
CHURCH

309 Baldwin St  
Morgantown WV 26505



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**Officers Of The Congregation**

President: Larry Springer  
Vice President: Bill Graham  
Secretary: Tamara Riegel  
Treasurer: Dave Stiles  
Financial Secretary: Sandy Price

**Council Members**

Bill Graham	Larry Springer	Connie Toffle
Robert Zay	Steve Gabbert	Bruce Schreiman
Tamara Riegel	Lu Ann Hartley	Misti Bartlett