



# THE EPISTLE

Volume 7 Issue 11

St Paul Lutheran Church

November 2008

## **CONGREGATIONAL MEETING 2009 BUDGET APPROVAL SEPTEMBER 9TH FOLLOWING THE 10:00 AM SERVICE**

### **FROM THE PASTORS DESK**

Monday after Reformation Sunday 2008

Commemoration of William Temple, theologian, Archbishop of Canterbury

Oct. 27, 2008

*How's the Water?*

Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

One morning two young fish were swimming along in the ocean. Soon, an older fish swam past and greeted them, "Good morning fingerlings! How's the water this morning?" The two fish each wiggled a fin in response and kept swimming until the older fish had passed out of earshot, and one of the younger fish turned to the other and said, "What's water?"

Sometimes we are so completely surrounded by our environment that whatever is all around us is almost invisible to our senses, like when we are cooking and can't smell what we are making. The environment just blends in around and sometimes we need someone to point out the completely obvious or there needs to be some change in our experience of the situation so we become aware of our surroundings.

For humanity, God is that new presence in our midst who makes us aware of what is truly going on around us. Hearing God's Word addressed to us, in the forms of both law and gospel, strips away the shroud that covers our base assumptions of the world. God's revelation in Jesus Christ has made us aware not only of our sin, our broken relationships, but also of the new life being made real in us now, as well as the ultimate new life to come in the resurrection at the return of Jesus.

Now that experience of God's revelation opens us up to even more things around us that have happened since Jesus' time, or even as recently as Luther's time, most notably the rise of the individual. We exist in a world whose background assumptions are that the individual reigns supreme. We think people may engage in self-destructive behavior if it's not hurting anyone else, although we sometimes fail to see the full ramifications of the systemic effects of that harm. Individuals are expected to pull themselves up by their bootstraps if they fall. Individuals are seen as the makers of their own destiny. This supremacy of

the individual has much to do with a period known as the Enlightenment, when philosophers tried to extract universal truths from the Bible and Christianity so that they could apply to all humanity, and each person could live a good life.

But in the waters of baptism, we are reminded that when we are marked with the cross of Christ, we are made members of the Body of Christ, a particular community united to the death and ultimately the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We belong to a “royal priesthood,” not that each of us is a priest, but that we as that community gathered around the crucified and resurrected Jesus of Nazareth, are a communal priesthood, authorized by God to lift things up before him in prayer. But we are not just a community of individuals. We realize that being connected to Jesus, we are connected to one another. What we do, no matter how seemingly isolated, affects our brothers and sisters. We are simply not the free moral agents we believe we are, because with the unveiling that God’s Word brings, we know that our nature is fallen. Sin has corrupted not only our world, but our very selves. When we act on our own, we can only isolate. When we act within the reality where all of our assumptions and background are stripped are made known, that is within God’s will, sin and brokenness may be overcome and God is at work reconciling the world to true love and devotion to him, which is the only place where we, being created in God’s image, may find our true end.

This type of view requires us to examine absolutely everything. One writer has talked about even our understanding of gifts must be analyzed. As individuals, we are prone to believe that when we receive a gift there has been some transfer of ownership. We are now free to do with said gift whatever we choose. Normally we will treat it respectfully, so as not to offend the giver, but we will ultimately hold the option to do with it whatever we want—put it under the bed, use it as a coaster, as a litter box liner, whatever. But when we think about God’s gifts to us, for God is an incredibly generous giver, not even withholding his only-begotten Son from us, we must take pause. Charles Lane writes,

Imagine that I buy a gift for my son. After I buy that gift, it belongs to me. I have paid for it. It is mine. Then on a birthday or at Christmas, I wrap that gift (or more accurately, my wife does), and give it to him. He unwraps it, thanks me for the gift, and at that point, it belongs to him. I have given up any claim to it. What he does with the gift from that point on is not in my control; it is in his control... The gift is his. He owns it.

This isn’t the way it is with God and us. No such transfer of ownership occurs. God has created all that is, and God continues to own all that is. Everything we have still belongs to God. We are given the privilege and responsibility to care for that which belongs to our heavenly Father.<sup>1</sup>

These waters... the waters of baptism, are dangerous and tricky things. Being washed in these waters we are given a new view of the world, away from the isolated and self-centered view of the individual and toward God’s vision of what it means to be part of the chosen people of God. We are given a radical discontinuity between the way the world sees and operates and how God desires his people to exist.

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<sup>1</sup> Lane, Charles R., *Ask, Thank, Tell*, Augsburg Fortress, 2006, p. 22

We live in a world where we are never completely in charge. God is always our greatest hope, always the one who orders our existence. But in stripping away our ideas of how things should be, we are freed to live as God desires, freed to walk as the baptized children of God.

How's the water, brothers and sisters?

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Brian

### **FROM THE CHAPEL:**

A big thanks to the folks that continue to provide refreshments for the Sunday evening mass at the Chapel. Special thanks are due for the Reformation 1958 fellowship coffee hour which was tasty and educational.

The Chapel will be closed for Thanksgiving break, beginning Nov. 22nd. We reopen with 7:00 PM mass on Nov. 30th.

Plans are being made for Advent Gregorian complines. If you would like to join the Schola for this season, let Chaplain Riegel know (304-296-5388 or Chaplain@Lutheran Mountaineer.org).

### **SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS:**

The Sunday School is getting geared up for Advent and Christmas

Dates to remember: Dec. 7th Advent event for all ages, during the Sunday School hour, 9AM.  
 Dec. 14th Rehearsal for Christmas program during Sunday School hour.  
 Dec. 21st Christmas program.

In November we will begin collecting layette items for Birthright of Morgantown. During this time when we remember the savior who came to us as a little child, we will also remember other babies around us who need our aid.

We Howl for Towels! We have collected more than 50 towels for the Bartlett House! Thanks to everyone for your generosity!



**THANKSGIVING SERVICE**  
**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25TH**  
**7:00 PM**

## **BIRTHRIGHT OF MORGANTOWN**

*Birthright is a free counseling-coordinating service available to women of any age, race or creed with an unexpected pregnancy. Crisis counseling services with a continuing program of care is provided throughout a pregnancy. They also provide free pregnancy testing, transportation, maternity and baby clothes.*

*Birthright was started in Toronto in 1968 and it is an inter-denominational, non-political organization. It is staffed entirely by volunteers and is entirely supported through private donations.*

*Birthright of Morgantown has an office at 364 High Street and it holds regular office hours Monday through Friday each week. It is just one of many offices worldwide.*

## **OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL CHILDREN CHALLENGE US TO HELP NOV. 16 THRU DEC. 14**

Women who are helped by Birthright are given a layette set consisting of newborn items for their baby. Birthright is always in need of items to make these layette sets. These are women and babies in need, many whom live in poverty.

Our Sunday school's Christmas service project will be collecting newborn items and donating them to Birthright. As we prepare for Christmas and the celebration of Jesus' birth, we remember mothers in our community, poor like Mary, who are in great need, many of whom are struggling to provide for their babies

### **PLEASE HELP US BY PLACING ITEMS IN THE CRIB IN THE NARTHEX**

Collection dates will be Nov. 16 through Dec. 14.


### **ITEMS NEEDED** **NEWBORN SIZES ONLY**

*Newborn sleepers, onsie's (shirts that snap in the crotch) and simple newborn outfits, baby wipes, desitin, baby lotion, baby shampoo, ear /nose suction, and blankets. Homemade crochet baby blankets are most welcome.*

***Please choose neutral colors such as GREEN or YELLOW as the sex of the baby is not always known before birth.***

***NO SOCKS, BOOTIES OR DIAPERS NEEDED PLEASE***

***THANK YOU!!!!***



*The Service League of Morgantown  
invites you to share the spirit of the season at the*

*Annual Holiday Open House.*

The Old Stone House Gift Shop  
313 Chestnut Street  
Morgantown

Friday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, 10am-6pm

Saturday, November 1<sup>st</sup>, 10am-6pm

Sunday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 12pm-4pm

*Visit our quaint, historic shop for unique holiday gifts including WV items  
and locally handcrafted products.*

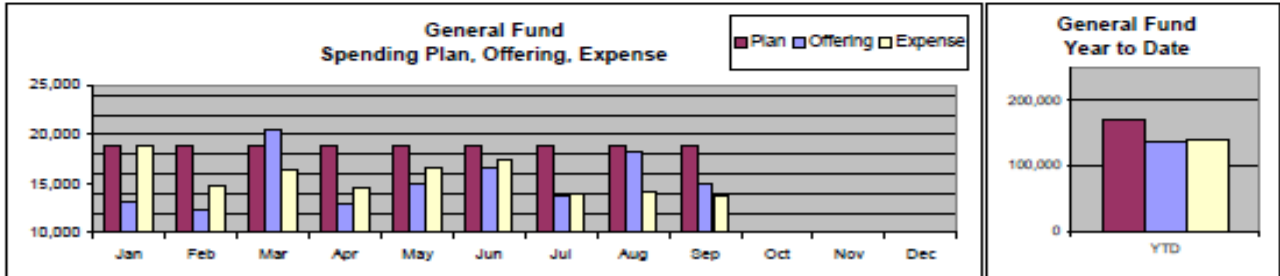
*Tea and cookies served.*

*Proceeds benefit the citizens of Monongalia County.*

# Treasurer's Report

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

September 2008	September				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	15,059	18,823	(3,764)	80%	137,072	150,583	91%		137,072
Designated/Restricted								25,559	25,559
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>16,068</b>	<b>18,823</b>	<b>(3,764)</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>137,072</b>	<b>160,683</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>26,668</b>	<b>162,631</b>
<b>Expenses</b>									
Designated/Restricted						360		27,668	27,668
Congregational Council	151	40			593	0		0	0
Benevolence	0	3,154	(3,164)	0%	19,324	29,486	66%	0	19,324
Church Mortgage	568	616	(48)	0%	5,136	5,544	93%	0	5,136
Committee - Christian Education	559	350	209	160%	1,908	4,550	42%	0	1,908
Committee - Fellowship	0	79	(79)	0%	453	1,018	45%	0	453
Committee - Staff Support	26	0	26	0%	26	30	88%	0	26
Committee - Outreach	86	163	(78)	53%	1,770	1,863	95%	0	1,770
Committee - Property	58	325	(287)	18%	848	2,925	29%	0	848
Committee - Recourse	0	0	0	0%	578	200	289%	0	578
Committee - Stewardship	0	0	0	0%	0	100	0%	0	0
Committee - Worship & Music	450	485	(35)	93%	5,081	4,972	102%	0	5,081
Insurance	0	272	(272)	0%	2,739	2,945	93%	0	2,739
Building Operation	2,095	2,087	8	100%	16,168	15,895	81%	0	16,168
Office Operation	679	582	87	117%	4,629	5,238	88%	0	4,629
Parish Communications	75	185	(110)	40%	1,594	1,715	93%	0	1,594
Payroll	8,936	9,709	(772)	92%	80,129	87,378	92%	4,224	84,353
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>13,884</b>	<b>18,047</b>	<b>(4,383)</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>140,878</b>	<b>168,208</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>31,882</b>	<b>172,277</b>
<b>Excess of Support and Revenue Over Expenses</b>	<b>1,375</b>	<b>776</b>	<b>599</b>		<b>(3,906)</b>	<b>(17,626)</b>		<b>(6,333)</b>	<b>(9,646)</b>



### 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

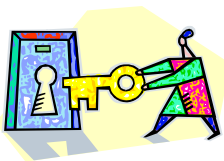
All registered parishioners will continue to receive envelopes, including envelopes for special collections for a variety of needs. Parish collections will be taken each week as usual. Participants in the Electronic Giving program are asked to mark their envelopes "EFT" and place them in the collection 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, September 11th, and we wish to share some of the highlights with you.

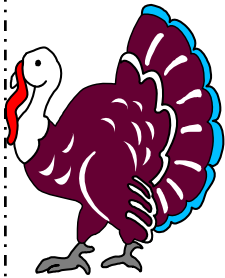
- Congregational Budget Meeting November 9th after the service. Reminder that committee need to submit their 2009 Budget to Council by October 27th.
- Ann Cloonan has offered to help with updating our member register. Anyone that would like to help please see Ann.
- Final registration for the 2009 National Youth Convention was due October 12th.



**FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE:** We are still having a problem with doors being left unlocked. PLEASE if you unlock any of the church doors please make sure that they are locked when you leave—even if you are not the last person in the building. Your help with this problem is greatly appreciated!!!!

**WOMEN OF THE ELCA NEWS:** The Challenge of Ruth — In the November meeting of the Women of the ELCA we will complete our study of Ruth in the Old Testament. We invite any women who can find some free time on Wednesday, November 12 between 2:00 PM and 4:00 PM to join us for a conversation about this material. Besides an enlightening lesson, please share our fellowship and friendship in the lounge near the church office. We would like to know you better.

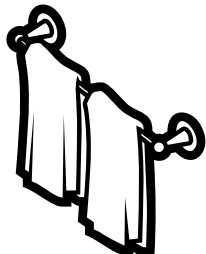
### THANKSGIVING BASKETS



Once again this year we are collecting donations for Thanksgiving baskets that will be given to Scott's Run Settlement House and Rock Forge Neighborhood House. If you would like to help with this worthwhile project please call the church office or see Dave Stiles. We are asking for donations of food (for a list of food needed please see Dave or call the church office) or monetary donations. If you would like to donate money please specify that your donation be used for the Thanksgiving baskets only and place them in the offering plate.

We appreciate your continuing support of this outreach to families in our community that need our help during this holiday season!!!!

### THANK YOU!!!!



A huge thank you to everybody who contributed to the "Howl for Towels" collection during the month of October for the Bartlett House. We were overwhelmed with the great response of 85 towels!!! They were wonderful and the Bartlett House will surely make use of them for a long time!!! THANK YOU SO MUCH!!

The Sunday School Students, Parents and Teachers

## 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  
Kathy Marrow  
Madge Hall  
Jared Schreiman  
Phyllis Henry  
Jill Park  
Jan Nestor  
Sarah Bishop  
Bob Snyder  
Nancy Hartley  
Scott Nelson  
Rachel Sheets  
Norma Linton  
Linda & Kristen Kleeb  
Tom & Betty Kelso  
Karen Starkey  
Philip Smith  
Ron Fortney  
Charlie Wodzinski  
Wil Gladfelter  
Sherry Fox  
Gretchen Brown  
Nina Brand  
Alice McEwuen  
Jared Schreiman  
Carolyn Walters  
Phil Quarrier

### Home Bound

Mary Hutchinson  
James Sharkey  
Virginia Sweitzer  
Rilla Tonon

### Grief

The family of:  
Rebecca Donaldson

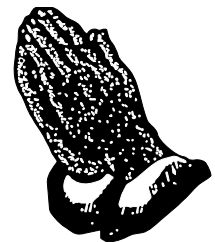
### Recuperation Active Duty

Sierra Gabbert  
Rob Walters  
Brian Fox  
Jason Glass

### Wedding

### Family Concerns

St. Mark's Lutheran  
Clarksburg, WV



## THE GREEN CORNER

This Thanksgiving gives us time to reflect upon our blessings, especially with the humility of Francis of Assisi who recognized the intricate web of life on which we, with all other creatures, depend. This election year also gives us the limited option of choosing our leaders. Perhaps Chief Seattle's letter of response to the U.S. Government can help us with our moral decisions. It inquired about buying land from the Chief of the Suquamish and other tribes in the mid-eighteenth century. If you wish to sign on to a petition instructing our government officials to preserve and protect our Clean Water Act, see Green Bulletin Board. Want to save the fresh water brook trout? "In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these..."

### CHIEF SEATTLE'S LETTER

"The President in Washington sends word that he wishes to buy our land. But how can you buy or sell the sky? The land? The idea is strange to use. If we do not own the freshness of the air and the sparkle of the water, how can you buy them?"

"Every part of this earth is sacred to my people. Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every meadow, every humming insect. All are holy in the memory and experiences of our people.

"We know the sap which courses through the trees as we know the blood that courses through our veins. We are part of the earth and it is part of us. The perfumed flowers are our sisters. The bear, the deer, the great eagle, these are our brothers. The rocky crests, the juices in the meadow, the body heat of the pony and man, all belong to the same family.

"The shining water that moves in the streams and rivers is not just water, but the blood of our ancestors. If we sell you our land, you must remember that it is sacred. Each ghostly reflection in the clear waters of the lakes tells of events and memories in the life of my people. The water's murmur is the voice of my father's father.

"The rivers are our brothers. They quench our thirst. They carry our canoes and feed our children. So you must give to the rivers the kindness you would give any brother.

"If we sell you our land, remember that the air is precious to us, that the air shares its spirit with all the life it supports. The wind that gave our grandfather his first breath also receives his last sigh. The wind also gives our children the spirit of life. So if we sell you our land, you must keep it apart and sacred, as a place where man can go to taste the wind that is sweetened by the meadow flowers.

"Will you teach your children that the earth is our mother? What befalls the earth befalls all the sons of the earth.

"This we know: the earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the earth. All things are connected like the blood that unites us all. Man did not weave the web of life, he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself.

"One thing we know: our god is also your god. The earth is precious to him and to harm the earth is to heap contempt on its creator.

"Your destiny is a mystery to us. What will happen when the buffalo are all slaughtered? The wild horses tamed? What will happen when the secret corners of the forest are heavy with the scent of many men and the view of the ripe hills is blotted by talking wires? Where will the thicket be? Gone! And what is it to say goodbye to the swift pony and the hunt? The end of living and the beginning of survival.

"When the last Red Man has vanished with his wilderness and his memory is only the shadow of a cloud moving across the prairie, will these shores and forests still be here? Will there be any of the spirit of my people left?

"We love this earth as a newborn loves its mother's heartbeat. So, if we sell you our land, love it as we have loved it. Care for it as we have cared for it. Hold in your mind the memory of the land as it is when you receive it. Preserve the land for all the children and love it, as God loves us all.

"As we are part of the land, you too are part of the land. This earth is precious to us. It is also precious to you. One thing we know: there is only one God. No man, be he Red Man or White Man, can be apart. We are brothers after all."

SERVING ST. PAUL November 2008	LAY ASSISTANTS	LECTORS	ACOLYTE-CRUCIFER	USHERS	NURSERY WORKERS	COUNTERS
<b>2nd</b> 10:00 AM	J. Lee	S. Armstrong	K. Smith A. Grosso	G & K Kullman L & L Paulson	J. Graham McCulla Family	P. Cushing S. Gabbert
<b>9th</b> 10:00 AM	S. Woodruff	S. Woodruff	P. Cushing M. McCulla	E. Dillon K. Powell L. Springer S. Armstrong	A. Grosso B. S. Hollar	S. Price C. Toffle
<b>16th</b> 10:00 AM	D. Borrelli	M. Kirkpatrick	M. Bott-Hansmann AJ Bartlett	T & F Potter S. Bartlett ML Cushing	K. Custer S. Rizzo	C. Henry T. Riegel
<b>23rd</b> 10:00 AM	M. Haas	B. Stiles	E. Stiles E. Stiles	P. Smith S. Lynch E. Graham C. Henry	J. Graham M L Bennett	K. Powell LA Hartley
<b>25th</b> <b>7:00</b> Thanksgiving Service	M. Haas	S. McEwuen	J. Borelli	S. McEwuen LA Hartley		
<b>30th</b> 10:0 AM	J. Lee	B. Schreiman	K. Custer E. Custer	D & C Custer B & J Schreiman	M. Bott-Hansmann Ford-Werntz Family	P. Cushing M. Bartlett

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

# November 2008

## Monthly Planner

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																				
<b>2</b> 9:00 AM Sunday School 10:00 AM Service 11:45 AM Confirmation Class	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 10:00 AM Bible Study 7:30 PM Jesus Over Java	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> 10:00 AM Piece makers	<b>8</b>																																																																																				
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ST PAUL LUTHERAN  
CHURCH

309 Baldwin St  
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