



The Cornerstone

ST. PAUL'S EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH
Saginaw, Michigan

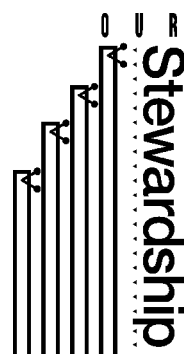
SPUR ONE ANOTHER ON

Volume 32

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MAY SERVICE INFORMATION AND READINGS

May 4 th	Confirmation Sunday
May 11 th	Pentecost Sunday
	Joel 2:28-29, Acts 2:1-21, John 16:5-11
May 18 th	Trinity Sunday
	Genesis 1:1-2:3, 2 Corinthians 13:11-14, Matthew 28:16-20
May 25 th	Pentecost Two
	Deuteronomy 11:18-21, 26-28, Romans 3:21-25a, 27-28, Matthew 7:15-23



Stewardship involves teamwork. So often we stress the personal side of stewardship, and rightly so. We talk about how each of us may use our own talents and time, for instance, to serve the church. But such use does not affect each of us alone, nor does the church rely on just one person's talents and time.

How might we as members of the same "team" do stewardship together? The writer to the Hebrews has some important things to say about that: *"Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching."* Hebrews 10:24-25

The second encouragement given is perhaps more obvious than the first. The writer encourages us to keep meeting together. It's important to do that especially when we remember the reality of the approaching Judgment Day. We want to be ready for that day. We help one another be ready as we meet together. One of the best ways we can carry out that encouragement is through worshiping together regularly.

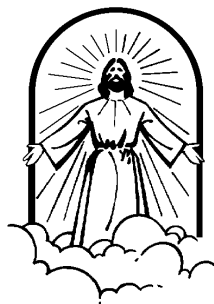
But how can we "spur one another on" to love and good deeds? Let's consider that, just like the author says. Consider, for instance, a son or daughter who has gifts for the public ministry. As parents, grandparents, pastor or teachers we can give them the encouragement to think about that blessed privilege. Consider a fellow congregation member who has certain gifts but might be too shy to let that be known. We can encourage such a person to go ahead and give it a try, that he or she is among friends and that any effort they give as they use their talents will not be ridiculed. Consider an inactive member who not only is missing out on the blessings of being involved in church but could also actually be a blessing to others if he or she were more involved. Such a person we can encourage to get involved once again with some aspect of the congregational life, but especially with worship. Those are a few examples.

Notice the author says to "spur" one another on. That reminds you of a rider on a horse, doesn't it? Sometimes a gentle tug on the reins works, but at other times a little jab of the spurs into the horse's side is needed. Since we're talking about fellow congregation members and not horses, we'll want to be careful about (consider) when we use spurs or not. Just as a rider will also take care of his horse by feeding it and giving it water and maybe even a gentle stroke on the forehead, to which a horse will be more likely to respond, so also a fellow congregation member is more likely to respond to the encouragement we give when he or she knows we deeply care.

That brings us back to what it is that motivates us individually to consider our own talents and time and how we may use them for the good of the church. God has shown his love to each of us; God has fed and nourished us through the gospel; God has poured out on us the saving water of baptism; God has "stroked" us with his tender care.

How wonderful to get together and worship that God together! How wonderful to serve him together and for the good of one another with what he's given to us! It's definitely something to consider!

From the Board of Stewardship



ASCENSION SERVICE

A special worship service to celebrate the Ascension of our risen and victorious Savior will be held at church on Thursday, May 1st at 7:00 p.m.

PUBLIC EXAMINATION

On Friday, May 2nd at 7:00 p.m., the Public Examination of our Youth Confirmands will take place at our church. All members are invited and encouraged to attend. Light refreshments will be served in the church basement following the Examination.

CONFIRMATION

Our Confirmation Service will be on Sunday, May 4th, in the 10:30 a.m. service. You are invited to attend the service to give your support and encouragement to our new confirmands. They are: Austin Bauer, Haley Berka, Danielle Boehm, Todd Brassow, Samantha Carey, Kaitlyn Clauss, Jared Donaghy, Kelsi Frost, Evan Gennrich, Colby Hare, Marion Moffett, Luke Morrell, Maria Prange, and Jesyka Yon. We also observe Confirmation Reunion Sunday, welcoming members of the classes of 1958 and 1983.

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR MARCH, 2008

	ST. PAUL'S MINISTRY	SYNODICAL MINISTRY	PIF
BUDGET			
ACTUAL			
	<u>Year To Date</u>		
BUDGET			
ACTUAL			
% of budget	93%	97%	92%

APRIL COUNCIL MEETING

The Church Council met on Tuesday, April 8th. At that meeting the Council approved the following membership changes: Transferred Out: Melissa (Beach) Bater to Prince of Peace, Salt Lake City, Utah; Amanda Bright to King of Kings, Maitland, Florida; Eric Russell to St. Paul's, Livonia, Michigan. Released: Bonnie Bright.

The next Council meeting is Tuesday, May 6th, at 8:00 p.m.

QUARTERLY VOTERS' MEETING

The 2008 First Quarter Voters' Meeting was held at the Parish Center Sunday, April 13th. Quarterly reports were presented, read and approved. In addition, the following motions were discussed and approved:

- 1) The disbursement of \$400 from the Endowment Fund for hospital pamphlets and devotional booklets.
- 2) To call a one-year emergency teacher for 7th grade for the 2008-09 school year. The candidates for the call would be synod-certified teachers from the Saginaw area, or from Martin Luther College.
- 3) Approval of the expense of \$1,816 for lawn care at the school from Tru-Green.
- 4) The original loan due to the congregation from Michael Kumwenda be adjusted from \$13,350 to \$10,600, and the current balance due from that loan be reduced from \$12,750 to \$10,000.

The next scheduled Voters' meeting: **Monday, July 14th, 7:30 p.m. at church.**



QUARTERLY UPDATE

2008 FIRST QUARTER STATISTICS

BAPTISMS: January 10th - Amara Lynn Ruffini
 February 17th - Monterra Sade Trammel
 February 17th - Leslie Love Garrett
 February 24th - Dora Salazar Erica Ramirez
 March 23rd - Joshua James Needham

FUNERALS: February 3rd - Leona Westendorf

ATTENDANCE		2008	+/-	2007
WORSHIP	January average	661	- 7	668
	February average	554	-88	642
	March average	682	+15	667
	First Qtr average	636	-23	659

BIBLE CLASS		2008	+/-	2007
Sunday average	88	-5	93	
Wed a.m. average	18		18	
Wed p.m. average	21	+4	17	
Youth average	20	+8	12	

COMMUNION January - 611 February - 602 March - 795
 First Quarter Total: 2,008 Last Year: 1,748

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES (January through March)

Received into membership: *By transfer* - Scott and Stephanie Lahmann from Salem, Owosso; Shannon Adams from St. Luke, Vassar; Marie Mahler from Good Shepherd, West Allis, Wisconsin; Rodney, Mary and Tiffany Pringle from Shepherd of the Hills, Lansing. *By Profession of Faith:* Johanna Kirschke; Ryan Wolter. *By Adult Confirmation:* Stephanie Corne (Jesyka Yon, Erica Yon, Casey Yon, Zackary Workman); Corey Ward; Wade Oakes.

Removed from membership: *By transfer:* Rachel Gwizdala to Trinity, Bay City; Richard and Shirley LaGruth to St. John, Zilwaukee; Ronald and Shelley Smith to Holy Trinity, Wyoming; James and Patricia Krueger to Bethany, Saginaw; *Released by request* - Craig Dogger; Angela Martin (Ashlyn and Trenton). *Released unable to serve:* Keri Moore (Jonah); Rebecca Raube.

OWLS

The OWLS is an organization that seeks to enrich the lives of WELS and ELS seniors, 55 and over, through service to the Lord and his Church. Our local branch normally meets on the 2nd Friday of the month in the school cafeteria. We sit down to a pot-luck fellowship at 1:30 p.m., squeeze in a short program and business agenda, and close at 3:30 with a brief devotion.

In March, Missionary Larry Retberg updated us on the theological training that our synod is offering to a group of searching Christians in Bolivia. In April we ate out and then toured the PBS radio and TV facility located at Delta College.

On Friday, May 9th, Bryan Cook, a pharmacist from the Meijer store on Gratiot, will present the topic: "Making Your Pharmacy User Friendly." Join us and see if the OWLS is for you, and invite your friends from our sister congregations as well. For more information, call Dan Westendorf (790-2759.)



ADULT CHOIR REHEARSALS

The Adult Choir will rehearse *at church* on Thursday, May 1st at 8:00 p.m. (following the Ascension Service,) and *at church* on Thursday May 8th at 6:15 p.m.

ST. PAUL'S NIGHT OUT

Knowing that "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God," we join with the apostles proclaiming, "We cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."

Please join the Evangelism Committee on Thursday, May 15th, at 6:30 p.m. at the Parish Center for a "night out." We will depart to a local neighborhood in order to 'reintroduce' ourselves to those around us. At 7:30 p.m., we will return to the Parish Center for snacks and refreshments. There is no experience necessary, and everyone is invited. The more the merrier! For more information, contact John Boggs at 799-6977.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLOSING SERVICE AND PICNIC

The final day of Sunday School for this school year will be on Sunday, May 18th, beginning at 9:15 a.m. The closing service will start at approximately 9:40 a.m.

Our Sunday School picnic will also be held at the Parish Center that day, beginning at 12:30 p.m. We hope everyone will be able to come and enjoy the fun, food and fellowship! Please watch the bulletins for more information.

PICTORIAL DIRECTORY

We are producing a pictorial directory for our church. There is **no cost** to you or the church to have your photograph taken, and you will receive a complimentary 8x10 portrait and directory for participating. You will be able to view your images electronically immediately after you are photographed. At that time, you will have the opportunity to purchase additional portraits to share with family and friends. One stop is all that is required. The sign-up for photo sessions will continue through the middle of May. Please stop in the church basement to register for your family's photo session. Please note that the photography session will take place in June.

OUR SHUT-IN MEMBERS

AT HOME: Virginia Aldrich, Gladys Baumann, Esther Bode, John Brenner, Henrietta Buschmann, Willis and Gertrude Cooper, Marie Kionka, Jean Meyer, Marian Miller, William Patrick, Beatrice Purkis, Jeffrey Stahl.

DURAND CONVALESCENT CENTER: Crystal Kennedy

HEALTHSOURCE: Ruth Trier, Linda Pyorala

HOYT HOME: Ruth Fein

LIVONIA: Olitha Kipfmiller

LUTHER MANOR: Katharina Armbruster, Donald Eichstaedt, Howard Genske, Bernice Sapp, Josephine Miller

SAGINAW GERIATRICS: Charles E. Beach

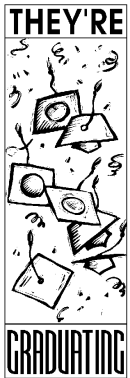
SAGINAW PINES: Hertha Fuhrmann, Merlein Oehring

STERLING HOUSE: Marie Mahler

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE RECOGNITION DAY

We have set aside Sunday, May 18th, as a day to recognize St. Paul's graduates of the various high schools in our area and to encourage them to continue their life's walk with the Lord. We will include a special insert in our bulletin that Sunday, listing the names of the graduates and their schools.

Parents, please let us know WHO will graduate and from WHAT SCHOOL, (and just for our records, which college, if any, they plan to attend.) We don't want to miss anyone, so please call the office (799-3271) with the information by Monday, May 12th. Thank you!



WOMEN SERVING CHRIST

Women Serving Christ meeting on May 20th, at 7:00 p.m., will have as its theme, "Music Boxes, Music and More." Please bring a favorite music box and share the story with us. We will sing old favorite songs and enjoy wonderful Christian fellowship. Ladies, please join us!

SPRING MUSICALE

We are all invited to our school's annual Spring Musicale on Wednesday, May 21st, beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the school gymnasium.

Come and enjoy our students' God-given musical talents. Bring the whole family – Grandpa and Grandma, too!

2008 MLS FINE ARTS FAIR RESULTS

Congratulations to the following students who participated in the MLS Fine Arts Fair on Saturday, March 1st and received Superior or Excellent ratings:

ART

Superior: Alize Burkhalter & Katlynn Bovee. **Excellent:** Cassandra Towne, Seth Willitz, Mitchell Baumgartner, Allison Boggs, Ellen Schmugge, Zachary Towne, Kaitlyn Cole, Collin St. Onge, Miriam Willitz, Todd Brassow & Samantha Carey.

FORENSICS

Excellent: Jason Spaude, Katlynn Bovee, Joel Prange, Tessa Snyder, Collin St. Onge & Miriam Willitz.

MATH

Superior: Joel Prange. **Excellent:** Robert Lightfoot, Kaitlyn Cole, Collin St. Onge & C.J. Milewski.

MUSIC

Superior: Kaitlyn Cole, Haley Berka, Todd Brassow & Maria Prange. **Excellent:** Kameron Carey, Kaitlyn Cole, Joel Prange, Tessa Snyder, Miriam Willitz, Marissa Bueche, Bryan Haiser & Allyson Moore.

SPELLING

Excellent: Tessa Snyder & Benjamin Snyder.

SCIENCE

Superior: Katlynn Bovee & Joel Prange. **Excellent:** Abbye Wenzell.

MR. SOSINSKI ENDS HIS MINISTRY AT ST. PAUL'S

Ron Sosinski, our 7th grade teacher and Athletic Director, has decided to leave his position here at St. Paul's Lutheran School after thirty-three years of faithful service. This will take effect June 30, 2008. He will certainly be missed by the students and by his colleagues. I'm sure we all wish him God's richest blessings on the new path he has chosen.

While Mr. Sosinski has asked that there not be any sort of farewell celebration for him, the Board of Education and Board of Elders have decided to allow members to express their appreciation by means of a farewell gift.

A letter with a gift envelope has been mailed out to all members of the congregation. If you plan to submit a gift, please do so by Monday, May 21st. Simply place your gift envelope in the offering plate, or get it to the office by that date.

CALL ASSIGNMENTS

This month divine call assignments will be given to graduates of Martin Luther College in New Ulm, Minnesota, on May 17th. In addition, at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in Mequon, Wisconsin assignments will be announced on May 20th (for Vicars) and May 22nd (for graduates.)

Our congregation has five members who are eligible for calls this spring! *Jamie Jurek, Ashley Lecker, Corinn Pyscher and Brian Schultz* will graduate from educational studies at Martin Luther College, and *James Hein* will graduate from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. In addition, *Seth Bode* will be receiving an assignment for his vicar year.

The call assignments will be posted on the websites of the two schools, www.mlc-wels.edu and www.wls.wls.net, after the call service at the school is completed.

SUMMER SCHEDULE

Our summer worship schedule begins on Memorial Day weekend, May 25th. From May 25th through Sept. 7th, Sunday morning services are 8:00 a.m. and **9:45 a.m.** The Monday evening service time remains the same, 6:30 p.m.

EIGHTH GRADE GRADUATION

The Eighth Grade Graduation Service for St. Paul's Lutheran School is Thursday, May 29th at 7:00 p.m. in the school gymnasium. Parents, relatives, and friends are invited to attend.

SPL CLOSING SERVICE

The 2007-2008 school year will close on Friday, May 30th, with a chapel service beginning at 8:15 a.m. The presentation of various awards and the distribution of report cards will take place following the service. Students will be ready to leave school at about 9:15 a.m.

MLS VOLUNTEER WEEKEND



MLS' 2008 Volunteer Weekend is set for May 30th and 31st, 2008. Much was accomplished last year and we hope to make this year just as valuable with your gift of time! More details, including a registration form, will be posted on the website, www.mlsem.org or call MLS (793-1041) if you would like the information and form mailed to you.

CHURCH CAMPOUT

The 2008 Church Campout will be at Rifle River State Park from June 20th-22nd. As always, non-campers are welcome to join us for the potluck on Saturday, the 21st! For more information, please call the office (799-3271.)

CHURCH SERVICE DVD

Volunteers make approximately one dozen DVD copies of each Sunday's worship service for our shut-in members and some out-of-town members. The response from those viewing our services this way has been wonderful. Imagine what it is like for some of those members who have been unable to attend services for some time. Now they are able to view our beautiful house of God, hear the sermon, the scripture readings, the hymns and liturgy, and maybe even be able to see one of our newest members being baptized!

There is no charge for these DVD copies for our shut-ins, but members are welcome to make donations to cover the cost of the DVDs, which is approximately \$2 a copy. If you would like a copy of one of the services, please call the office (799-3271).

MLS FOOTBALL & BASKETBALL CAMPS

Our students who will be *entering grades 5-9* (those entering the 9th grade must have an admissions application in to attend MLS) *in the fall* are invited to apply for a spot in one of the athletic camps that MLS will be hosting in June. The application deadline is June 1st, and each camp is open to the first one hundred applicants, so don't delay! Contact MLS (793-1041) for more information.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Our Vacation Bible School is scheduled for August 4th-8th. We could always use more volunteers for a variety of areas. If you are interested, please call Pastor Brassow (799-3271) even if you aren't sure how you can be of help. Pastor will be happy to let you know the different ways you can serve.

NEWS FROM THE WELS

STATISTICS SHOW MIXED PICTURE - The 2007 WELS *Statistical Report* is now available on the synod Web site at www.wels.net/jump/statistics and will soon be available in hard copy.

It's common knowledge that statistics can be used to make a point or to add strength to an argument. Depending on how they are used, statistics can also be used to spin the truth or to distort reality.

When looking at the statistical report for 2007, readers should let the numbers speak for themselves. The numbers for last year contain a mixture of good news, as well as news that might be somewhat disappointing. Here are just a few of the numbers:

Total baptized members declined slightly from 395,947 to 394,335—a decrease of 1,612 souls (less than one-half of one percent). This decrease in baptized membership continues a trend over the past six years, although the rate of decrease is less than in the previous two years.

Total communicant members declined slightly from 311,977 to 311,429—a loss of 548 communicants (less than two-tenths of one percent). This also continues a trend, but as in the case of baptized membership the decrease is significantly smaller than the previous year.

Infant baptisms increased by nearly two percent, rising from 6,831 in 2006 to 6,953 in 2007.

Adult confirmations declined from 3,852 to 3,672 but **adult baptisms** increased from 668 to 730.

We can see both blessings and challenges in these numbers. We know that it is the Holy Spirit who works faith and brings people into his family through the proclamation of the gospel. In that sense, every single soul represented by those numbers is a blessing. We can also note that the decrease in membership seems to have slowed last year, and that WELS has not experienced the losses experienced by many other church bodies. We also note the blessing of the increase in infant and adult baptisms.

While the membership in our synod has indeed decreased somewhat in the United States, we should also be aware of blessings that are not seen in these numbers. The report doesn't provide numbers for our world mission fields and sister church

bodies around the world where the growth of baptized membership has offset losses domestically.

As we continue to carry out the resolution of last summer's convention—to expand our efforts to share the gospel—we do so asking God to give us the zeal and dedication to be faithful in this work. We pray that every member, every family, and every congregation rededicates itself to sharing the gospel of Christ, and that as a synod we continue to focus on our God-given mission. And we do all of this together with the joy and confidence of knowing that as we faithfully plant and water, it is God alone who provides the growth.

Serving in Christ,
Mark Schroeder
(WELS president)

NEW MISSION EFFORTS IN NEVADA - Rev. Steven Hillmer is finalizing his plans to begin work in the suburbs of Reno, Nev., site of the next mission congregation with significant WELS funding.

Hillmer, who currently serves at Beautiful Savior in Marietta, Ga., accepted the call Mar. 6. He will initially serve as outreach pastor at Shepherd of the Mountains, an existing congregation in Reno that is partnering with WELS Board for Home Missions (BHM) to fund the new mission and to provide lay workers to get it off the ground.

"It's great to see the excitement of Shepherd of the Mountains to start this daughter church," says Hillmer. "It is just encouraging having fellow believers that are close by, praying for you, and are willing to help. By God's grace, I hope we will be able to establish a congregation in the area and bring more people into a living relationship with their Savior."

Hillmer says his plans are to serve in Georgia until mid-June and to begin work in Reno in early July when the new fiscal year begins and BHM funds are available for the call. Initial outreach efforts will be concentrated in a region known as North Valleys. Plans are to hold the first service on Palm Sunday of next year.

After arriving in Reno, Hillmer says he will be intensifying canvassing efforts in this region where an estimated 70 percent of the population is unchurched. "I've been there before," says Hillmer, who completed a summer vicarship in Bellevue, Wash., where an estimated 90 percent of the population is unchurched. "We knocked on the doors of several thousand homes and followed up, and only one of them came to the church and ended up going through Bible class. So it's not easy, but you meet one person at a time and let God's Word work in their hearts."

An installation service for Hillmer is planned for July 13.

For more information please go to: <http://together.wels.net/>