

St. Paul Lutheran Church
235 Jefferson
Hanover, IL 61041



St. Paul's EPISTLE

Dateline: January, 2019

NOTES FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

"Finishing What has been Started"

I love puzzles and kits and craft projects. But I seem to love buying them or getting them as presents more than I ever really love getting around to putting them together. It seems I collect projects because I like looking at them. I seem to miss the point that once you get over the joy and fun of seeing a new puzzle or kit you next have to use it to really get the enjoyment and purpose out of it.

I was thinking about this when I was thinking about the meaning of the Epiphany season and the way it is set up. Christmas is all about the celebration of the Christ Child coming to us. The gift of God with us. We celebrate Christmas with lights and bright colors, and of course, gifts for ourselves.

Epiphany follows on Christmas and is meant to focus on the revelation of who Jesus is. It opens with Epiphany itself, a commemoration of the wise men coming to pay honor for the birth of the Messiah. But the season progresses as the continuing, unraveling of the message of who Christ is.

Following the revelation of God's coming among us, is the revelation of Jesus as Son of God in his baptism, then his revelation of his glory as seen in his first sign, the miracle of water into wine. Then follows Jesus' own revelation of his mission at the synagogue in Nazareth, followed by rejection and next calling his disciples to fish for followers with him. Next his message his revealed and finally, Epiphany season always ends with the Transfiguration; the most spectacular revelation of Jesus' glory before his resurrection.

The revelation of Jesus moves from his announcement, to message and mission. Seeing Jesus eventually leads to following Jesus. Christmas is very popular for it focuses on the gift that has been given. Epiphany is when we get to open it up and start understanding what it means for our life and how we are to be changed as we follow and use it.

Let us all take up the challenge to follow the light that has been revealed at Christmas. To accept again with even more determination the challenge to open the box and let God put us together as part of the Lord's puzzle—the ever growing and serving body of Christ. May we move from joy at the light to being put together ourselves as lights for the world.

May God finish the work Jesus has begun in each of us, as we reveal Jesus to each other.

Peace,

Pastor Bruce

Holy Communion in January

Sunday, January 6 - St. John at 9 am
and St. Paul at 10:30 am

Sunday, January 13 - Trinity - 9 am

Sunday, January 20 - St. John at 9 am
and St. Paul at 10:30 am

Sunday, January 27 - Trinity - 9 am

Upcoming Meetings

St. Paul Annual Meeting

Our annual meeting will be held following services on February 3rd. Please get reports into Peggy by the third week in January.

Church Council Meetings

Tues., January 8 - 7 pm - Trinity

Sunday, January 13 - 11:30 am – St. Paul

Tues., January 15 - 7:30 pm - St. John

Mutual Ministry Meeting

Tuesday, March 5 - 7:30 pm - St. John

Men's Group Ministry

The Men's Group Breakfast Meeting will be on Sat., January 19, at 8:30 am, at the Welcome Inn in Elizabeth.

Women's Group Ministry

The Women's Group Ministry will meet on Thursday, January 17, at 2 pm, at Trinity..

The Pastors are Filling In

As many of you know, we have an extreme shortage of pastors in our synod with about 1-in-5 of our congregations seeking pastors. Though many are served by retired interim pastors, increasingly some are unable to count on regular interim ministers. Pastors Bruce and Lisa serve

Scenic Hills Lutheran Parish in part-time calls, each called to serve ¾-time instead of full-time. The pastors were approached to help out temporarily, part-time with Lord of Love in Galena. The bishop appointed them to a joint half-time interim with a time-limited contract not to exceed June 30, 2019. This will mean each pastor will serve ¼-time for the Galena church as Galena prepares for a new pastor.

If the arrangement does not work out well for all parties, it can be dissolved. During this interim the pastors are committed to continuing to prioritize Scenic Hills Lutheran Parish as this is their call unlike Galena which is a temporary contract. Lord of Love church understands that in the event of time conflicts or other scheduling problems, Scenic Hills will take precedence. Lord of Love changed their worship time from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. in order for the pastors to be able to fit in their worship service. It was noted in discussions about the situation that it is not unusual for a clergy couple to each serve two churches separately. For the moment, Lisa and Bruce will have a similar arrangement covering all four churches. Please pray for them and the leaders at Lord of Love as they work to discern God's call and mission for this young church.

Community Meals - Thank you to all the volunteers from each of our three churches who continue to keep our free community meals going in Elizabeth and Hanover. Attendance has remained strong and we have people who regularly come for the fellowship. If you haven't stopped by before, please consider dropping in and learning what these are all about.

In Elizabeth - last Tuesday of the month from 11 am to 1 pm.

In Hanover - usually the second Sunday of the month from 4 -6 pm.

Check the calendar for exact dates.

**Community of Christians
Elizabeth Meal**

The Elizabeth Community Meal will be on Tuesday, January 29, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. All volunteers are welcome to pitch in. Come to join the ministry, come for the food, check out the fellowship!

**Community of Christians
Hanover Meal**

The Hanover Community Meal will be on Sunday, January 13, from 4 to 6 pm. All volunteers are welcome to pitch in. Come to join the ministry, come for the food, check out the fellowship!

Community of Christians Meeting

The entire Community of Christians will meet at St. Paul Lutheran in Elizabeth on Wednesday, January 9, at 2:30 pm. All are welcome to attend. This is for ALL churches in the Elizabeth/Hanover area.

Contact Information

Pastor Lisa Burbank

Cell phone: 608-201-1860

Email: pastorlisaburbank@gmail.com

Pastor Bruce Burbank

Cell phone: 303-638-8716

Email: pastorbruceb@outlook.com

Parsonage Phone: 815-591-9970

Church E-mail:

churchsecretary@sandprairie.net

Parish Website address:

www.scenichillslutheran.com

Prayer List:

Please continue to pray for: The ELCA Bishops Eaton and Clements, the Church and Synod Councils, those serving our country in the military or the diplomatic corps, those who have served and returned with wounds, scars and emotional effects of war; all medical, aid and relief workers here and around the world, firefighters, first responders, doctors and nurses; and to those grieving including the family and friends of Maurine Sheppard and Marcus Gabriel.

Also please continue to pray for those with special prayer needs: Gerry Norton, Buddy Johnson, Adrienne Seagraves, Daryl Steinhagen, Libby Tipton, Kay Watson, Jackie Reusch, sister-in-law of Anna Appleby (Raymond's wife), and Karl Croffoot.

Our shut-ins: Anna Appleby, Doris Schaible and Sue Vandervate. ""

If you would like to serve as a "prayer warrior" on the Prayer Chains and pray for special needs OR know of someone who needs prayer, please call Barbara Schaible (815-591-3306) at St. Paul. You may only get the name.

Thank you for helping to bring the healing grace of our Lord into the lives of so many people. Prayer touches and changes the lives of those we pray for as well as the life of the one who prays. Whether you are on the prayer teams or pray by yourself, please keep all those listed in your prayers. Many of those on the list have already received miracles and we must pray that God grants many more.

Parish Calendar

- Sun., Jan. 6 - 1:30 pm - **Worship at the Elizabeth Nursing Home**
- Wed., Jan. 9 - 2:30 pm - **Community of Christians Meeting at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Elizabeth**
- Sun., Jan. 13 - 11:30 am - **St. Paul Council Meeting after worship**
- Sun., Jan. 13 - 4-6 pm - **Hanover Community Meal at the VFW**
- Thurs., Jan. 17 - 2 pm - **Parish Women's Group at Trinity**
- Sat., Jan. 19 - 8:30 am - **Men's Group Breakfast at Welcome Inn**
- Sun., Jan. 20 - 1:30 pm - **Worship at Waverly Place (Stockton NH)**
- Tues., Jan. 29 - 11 am-1 pm - **Elizabeth Community Meal at the Comm. Bldg.**
- Sun., Feb. 3 - 11:30 am - **St. Paul Annual Meeting following worship**
