

**ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
321 NORTH 10TH STREET
BEATRICE, NE 68310**

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PARISH NEWSLETTER

**St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Beatrice, Nebraska
FEBRUARY 2016**

Stpaulbeatrice.org

February 2016

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>7</p> <p>8:00am Divine Service 9:15am Bible Class & Sunday School 10:30am Divine Service</p>	<p>8</p> <p>7:00pm Weekday Holy Communion Service</p>	<p>9</p> <p>12:00pm Ladies Quilting 12:00pm Quilt Tying 7:00pm Elders</p>	<p>10</p> <p>9:30am Imposition of Ashes 10:00am Ash Wednesday Divine Service 1:30pm Naomi Circle 2:30-4pm Catechism 6:30pm Imposition of Ashes 7:00pm Ash Wednesday Divine Service</p>	<p>11</p> <p>12:00pm Ladies Quilting 2:00pm Lyda/Mary Circle</p>	<p>12</p> <p>1:30pm Eunice Circle</p>	<p>13</p> <p>1:00-3:00pm Confession & Absolution</p>
<p>14</p> <p>8:00am Divine Service 9:15am Bible Class & Sunday School 10:30am Divine Service</p>	<p>15</p> <p>7:00pm Weekday Holy Communion Service</p>	<p>16</p> <p>12:00pm Ladies Quilting</p>	<p>17</p> <p>10:00am Lenten Matins 2:30-4pm Catechism 7:00pm Lenten Vespers</p>	<p>18</p> <p>12:00pm Ladies Quilting</p>	<p>19</p> <p>8:00am Men's Bible Study/Breakfast at Aunt Mary's</p>	<p>20</p> <p>10:00am Altar Guild 1:00-3:00pm Confession & Absolution</p>
<p>21</p> <p>8:00am Divine Service 9:15am Bible Class & Sunday School 10:30am Divine Service</p>	<p>22</p> <p>7:00pm Weekday Holy Communion Service</p>	<p>23</p> <p>12:00pm Ladies Quilting 12:00pm Quilt Tying 6:30pm Social Club</p>	<p>24</p> <p>10:00am Lenten Matins 2:30-4pm Catechism 7:00pm Lenten Vespers</p>	<p>25</p> <p>12:00pm Ladies Quilting</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p> <p>10:00am "Let Your Light Shine" - LWML Event 1:00-3:00pm Confession & Absolution</p>
<p>28</p> <p>8:00am Divine Service 9:15am Bible Class & Sunday School 10:30am Divine Service</p>	<p>29</p> <p>7:00pm Weekday Holy Communion Service</p>	<p>Join us for Matins Soup Luncheon at 11:00am and Vespers Supper at 5:30pm on February 17 and 24.</p>				<p>National Lutheran Schools Week</p>

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SCHOOL NEWS

“For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.” 1 John 3:11

As February begins, we are looking forward to a busy month of learning and fun here at St. Paul’s Lutheran. On February 4th, we have scheduled Parent Visitation Day. We are excited to have parents and grandparents spend the day with us, eat lunch with us, and join us for special projects like Egg Drop Experiments and Volcano Building.

On February 10th, we will have a special chapel at 10:45 led by the directors of Camp Luther. They join us for a time of worship and praise, and also a time to share about the camping opportunities available this coming summer. Our chapel offerings for the month of February are designated for the Nebraska District Hearts for Jesus project, which this year is Camp Luther.

As we look forward to enrolling students for next year, we will have Kindergarten Open House on Tuesday, February 23rd beginning at 7:00 p.m. If you know any children who may be interested in coming to school at St. Paul’s for the 2016-2017 school year, please let them know about this upcoming event!

At the end of February, we will begin our celebration of National Lutheran Schools Week, by singing in church on Sunday the 28th at the 8:00 a.m. service. I also encourage you to mark your calendars for Friday, March 4th, and our annual Grandparent’s Day Program beginning at 10:00 a.m. in the St. Paul gymnasium.

We are presently taking applications for the 2016-2017 school year for the Preschool (3 year olds) and Pre-Kindergarten (4 year olds) class sessions. Anyone interested in enrolling should contact the school office at 402-223-3414 for an application.

We continue to save Sunmart Receipts, General Mills Box Tops for Education, Campbell’s Labels for Education, and Our Family Labels. Thank you for helping with these collections!

God’s Richest Blessings on your February,

Amy Duever, St. Paul’s Lutheran Principal

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Notes and Reminders...

Every Sunday -

8:00am & 10:30am - Divine Services

9:00am - Coffee & Snacks served in the basement

9:15am - Adult & Youth Bible Class and Sunday School

Church Office: Office hours are 8:30am to 1:30pm, Monday through Friday. The office may be closed on occasion, so please call ahead.

Every Wednesday during Lent

10:00am Lenten Matins

11:00am Matins Soup Luncheon (*Free Will Donation*)
Meals are served by the LWML Circles of the congregation

5:30pm Lenten Supper (Free Will Donation)
Meals are served by various boards of the congregation

7:00pm Lenten Vespers

Thank You to the gracious people at the BSDC for preparing our monthly newsletters for mailing this month. We sincerely appreciate their volunteer work and a job well done.

Thank You Notes Received:

Thank you for your contribution of \$84.82 (Dec. Coins for Christ) to the Community Pantry & Emergency Services. Your generous donation and continuing support is very much appreciated. From the Community Pantry & Emergency Services.

We want to thank everyone for the cards, phone calls, prayers, visits and memorial gifts. Especially to Lester Miller for the music, Pastor Irmer for his visits and the funeral service, and to the Ladies of Dorcas for the lunch. We cannot thank you enough. God be with you.
Art Pacha's Family



February at St. Paul's Lutheran School:

4 - Parent Visitation Day

15 - Presidents Day (No School)

23 - 2016-2017 Kindergarten Open House

28 - National Lutheran Schools Week Begins

Our St. Paul's students will be singing in church on the following Sundays: February 28, April 10 & May 15. Dates are subject to change.

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BULLETINS RECEIVED

December 13	Geri Heist	Desert Cross Lutheran Church, Tempe, AZ
December 20	Dorothy Nickels	Holy Savior Lutheran Church, Lincoln, NE
December 20	Arvid & Althea Wiest	Hope Lutheran Church, Shawnee, KS
December 24	Greg Daehling	Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Lincoln, NE
December 24	Bob & Vicki Frerking	First Mennonite Church, Beatrice, NE
December 24	Geri Heist	Desert Cross Lutheran Church, Tempe, AZ
December 24	Carline Mencl	First Presbyterian Church, Hutchinson, KS
December 24	Charlie & Barb Rose	Divine Shepherd, Omaha, NE
December 25	Helen Burger	Zion Lutheran Church, Kearney, NE
December 25	Greg Daehling	Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church, Eagle, NE
January 3	Dorothy Nickels	Holy Savior Lutheran Church, Lincoln, NE

Orphan Grain Train

2015 Local Report – Beatrice, NE

In the year 2015, 356 bags and 272 boxes have been collected and since we no longer have a branch in Lincoln, the Grand Island Branch has been picking up at the Bargain Box. We do continue to collect many things and when they come down, they also pick these items up. We also get help together to help load the trailer. We continue to get great support from The Bargain Box, The Good Samaritan Center, Beatrice Community Hospital, St. Paul's Lutheran School, Thrivent for Lutherans, PEO Home, area businesses, area churches, (including many churches in Kansas), and many individuals.

Included in some of the bags and boxes which we collected were the following:

1330 blankets and quilts	Many boxes and bags of	2 wheel chairs
494 knitted stocking caps	stuff toys	4 walkers
59 Health Kits	New socks and underwear	Houseware items
138 Pillow Dresses	5 boxes of Bible	21 bikes
Boxes of Medical Supplies	(distributed in NE for prison	2 baby beds
36 School Kits	ministry)	At least 25 sleeping mats
15 Back Packs	Some medical equipment	

There were also monetary contributions that were given and many more items. These items are in addition to what is being sent out by the Bargain Box. Thank-you Bargain Box for your great support.

Local volunteers also put in over 210 hours in helping with the fish feeds and in the collection, boxing, and loading of the above items. IF you wild like to donate any items or time, please call Martin D. Seckel, Jr. at 402-228-3085 or 402-223-7029.

Thanking everyone for their prayers, help, and donations. "GLORY BE TO GOD"

Martine D. Seckel Jr.

*Visit our website for the latest updates at
stpaulbeatrice.org*

Stewardship Article

We are saved by faith alone, but the faith that saves us is never alone. That is because faith is a living, busy, and active thing. It inhales all of God's riches in Christ and exhales this in love and service to the neighbor.

But who is my neighbor? God in His mercy has placed us into three distinct communities: society, family, and the church. That means we have a duty to those around us in each of these communities. We pray for the people in these three communities daily. We rejoice with them in times of joy and suffer with them in times of sadness. And we give to them from the income that God provides as we are able and as they have need.

So we pay taxes to our governments so that they may do the work that is needed for our neighbors in society. We give to our families so that they have food and clothing, house and home, even educations. And we give to our church—our local congregations—so that the gospel may be preached and the sacraments administered for us and others.

The beauty of this is that God smiles upon all that giving. When you pay your taxes, God is pleased that you have served your neighbor who needs what the government provides. When you provide for your family, God is pleased. That you have helped your neighbor with the necessities of life by sharing with them what He has given to you, God is pleased. And when you give to your local congregation to support the ongoing preaching of the gospel, God is pleased. To all this giving, He says to you, "Well done, my good and faithful servant."

Looking at giving in this light makes it a joy to give. The joy is multiplied. There is joy in you because you have served your neighbor in his need. There is joy in your neighbor for God has answered their prayers through you. And God rejoices and is pleased with it all. It might just make the humdrum of grocery shopping and mortgage payments a bit more joyous. It might even make April 15 tolerable (St. Paul had to have this pep talk with the Romans, also, "This is why you pay taxes...." Rom. 13:6). And it surely will make the envelope placed into the offering plate a joyful thing.

Indeed, God is pleased with you. You are saved by faith alone because of Jesus Christ. And that saving faith is never alone. It is busy and active. It serves the neighbor in society, family, and church with free and cheerful giving.



Is your light dim?

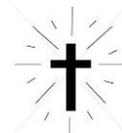
Come and get your battery charged.

Join the LWML Ladies for fun, food, & fellowship on

February 27, 2016 at 10:00am

in the church basement.

A "light" lunch will be served.



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Chad Bird wrote:

God doesn't believe in atheists. As they reject his existence, so he rejects their rejection. They may not believe in the true God, but they do fear, love, and trust in Some Thing. And that Some Thing is the deity enthroned within their hearts. All atheists are closet theists.

But God also doesn't believe in monotheists. We may confess that there is one God—and there is—but we are in fact religiously observant polytheists. With our lips we may say, "Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one," or "I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth," but examine our lives and you'll find that our hearts are as jam-packed with deities as Mt. Olympus.

Who are these gods? "That to which we look for all good and in which we are to find refuge in all need. Therefore, to have a god is nothing else than to trust and believe in that one with your whole heart," (Luther). There's a virtual flavor-of-the-month when it comes to the deities to whom we swear allegiance. In December, perhaps Family takes the throne. In March, it's Money that receives our adoration. In July, Sex becomes the god in whom we trust to get us by. In September, it's Career that means more to us than anything else. In between, we hook up with drugs or alcohol, power or fame, or any other pseudo-deities in the pantheon of options afforded us in this godfull world. As Luther says, "Anything on which your heart relies and depends, I say, that is really your God."

This is also why there is truly only one commandment and only one sin. That one commandment is "You shall have no other gods," and that one sin is idolatry. If we could keep this single commandment, if we could fear and love and trust in God above all things, then we would never break any of the other commandments. But because we do fear and love and trust in things above God—because we are inveterate idolaters—we break every other commandment. Because our hearts are idol factories whose doors never close, our lives are full of the repercussions of trusting in those gods who always disappoint.

The fool says in his heart, "There is no God," (Ps 14:1). But the fool also says in his heart, "There are many gods." And we, dear friends, are the fools. We have fooled ourselves into trusting in the untrustworthy. We have built the house of our lives on shifting sand. Wealth vanishes. Families die. Power can be stripped away. Sex is fleeting. There is only one God who never passes away, never abandons us, never treats us as anything less than his beloved children. And the best news of all: that one God is one of us.

He did not remain aloof in heaven and bark down orders that we must trust in him. Nor did he pay us an earthly visit, dazzle us with his Godness, demand faith, then vanish into the clouds again. He fully entered into our existence. God spent a few months in the fetal position beneath the bulging belly of Mary. God dirtied his diaper, learned how to walk, was schooled in his ABCs. God felt the sting of rejection, the bite of hunger, the tug of temptation. He experienced loneliness, helplessness, abandonment, agony, and felt the cold steel of the grim reaper. No human emotion is foreign to him, even the worst, such as shame and guilt and grief. In his finest hour, when he displayed his heart to the cosmos, he embraced all evil by becoming our worst in his execution. He even became our idolatry. God did this. God endured this. The one and only God who became our one and only Savior, did this because we are the objects of his love.

I am not an apologist; I cannot wow you with arguments as to the plausible existence of God. What I can tell self-professing atheists, however, is that the kind of God they reject is the kind of God who loves them so much he became their brother, their substitute, their Savior. Reject him as much as they want, he will not reject them. They too are reconciled to the Father in him; all they must do is believe what is already true and the gift is theirs.

What I can tell polytheists is that all our self-made deities are figments of our infidelity, as untrustworthy as we are. But for us, who are so prone to trust in all things more than God, God has already paid the price. His blood covers our idolatry. What's even better: Christ's obedience, his single-minded, single-hearted trust in his Father—that faith is credited to our account. There has been only one faithful monotheist in the history of humanity, Jesus Christ. The nakedness of our lack of trust is clothed by the faithfulness of Jesus.

I believe in one God: he is the Father who has sent his Son who sends his Spirit to bring us to faith in him, to adopt us as his children, to make us heirs of all his riches. In this one God we are one—no longer fractured by our multiple allegiance to other gods.

We are one in the one God whose one heart overflows with grace to us all in Jesus Christ.

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Notes from Pastor Irmer

The preaching of John the Baptist and the preaching of Jesus began with the same message: repent. It's not a message we like to hear. It's not a message that wins preachers a large fan-base. But it is the message of both John and Jesus: "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

We don't like to hear the message of repentance because it implies that we have done something we need to repent of. In other words, we have sinned. Repenting means that we have to let God be God, and we need to let God save us, rather than try to save ourselves.

Repentance means that we grieve and sorrow over the things that are ours and let God give us the things that are His. It is only God's righteousness that is good enough for God. God has made His righteousness incarnate in Jesus. That means that God became man in Jesus. God gives us that righteousness in Jesus' death on the cross.

For us to repent means that we look into the mirror of God's Holy Law, the Ten Commandments. When we thus examine ourselves we will find nothing but sin and uncleanness. When we start to think that we are "good enough", then we need to repent. When we start to think that if we just really try we can satisfy God's demands then we need to repent.

Repentance means leaving behind every thought and word and action of ours that we cling to for righteousness. Repentance means holding only to the righteousness of Jesus Christ to make us righteous before Almighty God.

In His mercy, God helps leads us to repentance. In our Catechism we learn that, "The Office of the Keys is that special authority that God gives to His church on earth to forgive the sins of those who repent and to withhold forgiveness from those who do not repent."

To lead us to that repentance God gives us confession and absolution. "Confession embraces two parts, first that we confess our sins and second that we receive absolution, that is forgiveness, from the pastor as from God, Himself, not doubting but firmly believing that by it our sins are forgiven before God in heaven."

During the Lenten season we concentrate on the suffering, Passion and death of our Lord Jesus. We realize that Jesus suffered and died to forgive our sins.

This Lent, on Saturday afternoons from 1:00 – 3:00 pm, starting on February 13, you will have the opportunity to hear God's gracious word of absolution, that is, forgiveness for you, personally, individually, specifically in the rite of confession and absolution (see Lutheran Service Book pg. 292-293).

Though I am always available for this rite, on these Lenten Saturdays I will be available in the Nave to hear confession and pronounce Holy Absolution in accordance with God's Word and our Lutheran Confessions (Augsburg Confession XXV). No appointment is necessary. You may come to the church and confess your sins and receive God's forgiveness for you specifically as our Catechism, and indeed God's Word, teaches.

A blessed Lent and God's peace be with you.

Pr. Irmer