

# SOWER

## NEWSLETTER



Building a Community of Disciples by Connecting People to Jesus and Each Other

Volume 18, Issue 1

January 2010

### *Cruisin' with the Sun*

Join the women of St. Paul's  
for a day of relaxation and fun.

January 30, 2010  
10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.



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# From the President

God Bless St. Paul's Community of Disciples.

We hope everyone greatly enjoyed the open house for our new facility on November 15th. I'm sure you all could sense the energy and excitement in the air. It was easy to see and feel the enthusiasm for the new facility and the potential it represents for our members and for the fulfillment of our mission.

Speaking of our mission, thanks to everyone who has participated so far in the surveys and focus group meetings with our strategy consultant, John Holm from TAG Church Consulting. We believe now is the time to review and update our Strategic Plan. We are thankful that Linda and Jason Richards have agreed to chair the Strategic Planning Team.

As a follow up to last month's report, the council agreed to spend additional funds in the new facility for:

- Carpeting for the classrooms and other areas
- Bathrooms, a basic kitchen set up, lighting and other items in the basement
- Carpeting for the library and offices
- Other improvements in the library.

Even with these important additions, we remain under budget for the new facility!

We ask for God's blessings and continued guidance for our church as we enter the new year.

God bless,  
Rodger Jensen  
Church Council President

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*RODGER JENSEN is the Council President of St. Paul's Lutheran Church. Contact Rodger at 402-896-2453 or [rjensen07@gmail.com](mailto:rjensen07@gmail.com).*

Pastor Lou is writing a BLOG where he is sharing some of his learnings on the Journey of Life. If you'd like to read or comment, please go to the St. Paul's website [www.crossandheart.org](http://www.crossandheart.org) and click on the Pastor's Blog link on the left side of the main page.

## MEMBERSHIP CONNECTIONS

**A**re you interested in joining the St. Paul's family? We have two new member orientation classes this winter and spring. The first will be on February 8th and the second is on April 19th. They run from 6-8:30 p.m., snacks and child-care are provided. Please contact Jan in the office if you are interested in signing up! You can also contact Aimee Sanders at [easisanders@hotmail.com](mailto:easisanders@hotmail.com) if you have any questions.

## PRESCHOOL NEWS

**W**ow! Time Flies!

I can't believe it is already time to talk about registering new little ones for the 2010-2011 school year! We will begin the process on January 15, by accepting registrations from our current families and members of St. Paul's. Registration opens to the public on February 15.

We have many different choices for your preschooler. During our morning hours of 9:00 – 11:30, we will offer one day and two day classes for three year olds, and two and three day classes for four year old children. We will offer a four day kindergarten readiness class in the afternoon from 12:30-3:00. Please look for more details on the registration form insert.

Our Scholastic Book Fair is coming soon! We will host a super fun pajama party on Thursday, January 21 from 6-8 p.m. We will also host a special Grandparents breakfast on Saturday, January 23 from 9-11 a.m. You are invited to attend both events; they will take place in the new Family Life Center.

*HOLLY MARASCO is the Director of Hearts & Hands Preschool. Contact Holly at 402-895-0723 or [hmarasco@crossandheart.org](mailto:hmarasco@crossandheart.org).*

# What It Means to be Lutheran? Part 3

A couple of months ago, I began a series of newsletter articles about “What it Means to be Lutheran.” We often hear people say: “That’s Lutheran” or “That’s Not Lutheran”. I want to talk about what it *really* means to be Lutheran. In November, I shared some of the history and teachings of the Lutheran Church and the heart of the gospel message – that we are saved by grace through faith. In December, I wrote about the St. Paul’s sign and wanting to be a church that is always reforming and seeking to reach out and share the gospel of

God’s love with others.



Lou Forney

This month I want to talk about worship. There is probably no area of church life that has gotten more attention in the last few decades than worship. Sadly, someone coined the

phrase “worship wars” to describe what has been going on among Christians in the United States over the last several decades when it comes to worship. Some churches want to preserve ancient traditions and styles while others want to adapt to the culture to reach the people of today, people who may not be as familiar with ancient traditions. Perhaps in no part of the church, have the distinctive lines been drawn more clearly than in worship.

Some churches (like St. Paul’s) are part of what we refer to as the mainline churches (Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians, etc.). Most mainline churches have histories that date back several hundred years. Many are rooted in the Protestant Reformation of the 1500s in Europe which Luther was a part of. Consequently, the roots of our worship life are rich in traditions that go back hundreds of years. Among the great musicians of the classical era, perhaps the most well know is Johann Sebastian Bach. We sometimes forget that Bach was a local church organist and cantor at The Thomaskirche (St. Thomas Church) in

Leipzig, Germany which happens to be Lutheran. The Lutheran Church has a rich history in terms of our music and worship. Even today when PBS wants to broadcast a Christmas Special, they turn to St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN or Luther College in Decorah, IA for great sacred music. These are both colleges of our denomination, the ELCA.

Another thing to remember is that when the Lutheran Church first got started, Luther simply took the Latin mass of the Roman Catholic Church and translated it to German. He didn’t make many changes in the format of the worship service so it looked a lot like the Roman Catholic Mass, just in German. In some ways, we started as a very traditional denomination. Luther knew that more adaptation and change would need to come if Lutherans were going to reach people with the gospel. More about that in a bit.

In this country there is another family of churches that are not mainline. Most of these denominations were formed in this country and are less than 200 years old. These denominations do not have the rich tradition and history of the Lutheran Church. They are referred to in a variety of ways, often they are called Evangelical Churches in this country. There is a certain irony there. Luther asked that the denomination that formed as the result of his reform efforts not be called Lutheran.

He wanted it to be called the Evangelical Church. Today, the Lutheran Church in Germany is called the “Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland”, abbreviated as EKD – the Evangelical Church of Germany. When our own denomination was formed in a merger back in 1988, we reclaimed the “E” word and are called the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The word evangelical is really important, rooted in a Greek work “euangelion” which means the good news or the gospel. Luther wanted us to be a church that loved and preached the gospel (that stuff about being saved by grace through faith in Christ). It is really weird when people juxtapose Lutherans and Evangelicals today, since we were the first Evangelicals nearly 500 years ago. Somehow over time, it appears to some that we became more Lutheran and less Evangelical, but Martin Luther was, in some ways, the first Evangelical!

Anyway, the churches that are often referred to as the evangelical churches in this country have very different roots. They grew up here in this country. Their roots do not go back to Bach. They don’t listen to organ music. Consequently, the format of their worship and the style of their music are very different—less classical influence, more American influence; less rooted in the music of Bach; and more reflecting the early American musical styles. These are denominations like the Nazarenes, the Church of God, and the Assembly of

*(Continued on page 11.)*

## SOWER NEWSLETTER

### DESIGN & EDITORIAL SERVICES

Lori Graham

*SOWER Newsletter* is published twelve times a year by St. Paul’s Lutheran Church as an informational and outreach service to members and friends of the congregation.

### ITEMS FOR PUBLICATION

Please submit articles, notices and photos for publishing electronically to:

[publish@crossandheart.org](mailto:publish@crossandheart.org) or mail them to:

St. Paul’s Lutheran Church

13271 Millard Avenue

Omaha, NE 68137

All items must be received on or before the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month for consideration in the next issue.



## ENDOWMENT NEWS

There are many advantages of giving stock to St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

A stock gift may allow you to bypass capital gains tax and you can usually deduct the full market value for gift. Giving stock can be better than giving cash given the tax advantages.

If you want more information about giving stock to the church, contact the St. Paul's Endowment Fund by calling Lori Graham at St. Paul's (895-3366) or Dick Lewis, President of the Endowment Board (895-2250).

Mark your  
Calendars



We have congregational meetings coming up after all services the weekend of January 30th and 31st.

Please plan on attending one of these meetings!

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH NEWS

# St. Paul's Thanksgiving Offering

The wonderful people of St. Paul's have been reaching out in Jesus' name in really beautiful ways. As Interim Outreach Pastor, so far I've mostly tried to start getting acquainted and to be encouraging while staying out of the way! So many projects to help others are long established and amazingly effective. I can't begin to list all the projects of the generous WELCA ladies, but I know that lots of love was sent with all the layettes, and the school kits, and the quilts, and so much more. Now we are doing Christmas boxes for the food pantry of First Lutheran and gifts for the children of prisoners with the Angel Tree project. We are encouraging a project by some of our seventh grade confirmation students by bringing lots and lots of coats to donate to those who need them so much. This is a time of year when there are many asking for help, and the loving and generous people of St. Paul's do not disappoint.

Our Thanksgiving project with World Fellowship Christian Center was very successful. Thank you ALL for bringing food, writing checks, and volunteering your time for the dinner deliveries. We provided 216 good Thanksgiving dinners. By all of that, we are being Jesus' hands and feet in the world, which is exactly what we are called to do. We also began to establish relationships with people in another part of our city, which enriches our lives greatly.

I am so grateful to God and to all of you. I am delighted to be here, and humbled by the privilege of serving alongside you.

Pastor Martha

*PASTOR MARTHA FREEMAN is the Interim Outreach Pastor at St. Paul's. Contact Pastor Martha at [mfreeman@crossandheart.org](mailto:mfreeman@crossandheart.org) or 402-895-3366.*

A thought for the month. As you walk through this year, I want to encourage you to really look at your life. How is it going? Are there things you still need to change to be who God created you to be? Are you reading God's Word daily to give you a greater insight and depth to your spiritual walk or in your child's life? Are you new to the idea of reading your Bible and can't quite make the time for it? You must try to make time, 10 min. a day, 5 days a week. If you learn about Jesus and God's plan, your life may get easier or it may get harder, but you will know Him for who He is. Open your Bible today and find the true God who has desired for you to know him better. You can purchase wonderful devotionals at the Christian Book stores in Omaha or online. The investment in reading the Word of God doubles or triples your child's and your families spiritual growth.

*JANETTE SANNE is the Children's Ministry Director at St. Paul's. Contact Janette at [jsanne@crossandheart.org](mailto:jsanne@crossandheart.org) or 402-895-3366.*

# children's ministry

## HAPPENINGS

**K**ingdom Quest Sunday Elementary will do 4-6 week rotations all year long. You do not need to register your child in advance, but you do need to fill out a registration form. Every parent is asked to donate their time for one rotation during the year. If we don't have teachers, we close the class that doesn't and combine grades when necessary. We start at 9:25 in the chapel for praise and worship and large group teaching.

**T**his summer's Sunday school rotation will be family oriented and we will be teaching how to read and study the Bible. It's not that we know everything; we had to learn, too. We want you to have the strongest spiritual walk you can possibly have. Don't take the summer off, this is the best time to learn! We have some fantastic teachers who are wonderful at teaching and passionate.

**K**ingdom Quest Preschool is fun and children rotate from area to area every 15–20 minutes. They will start with their own gathering time to sing and to listen to the story that pertains to the lesson of the week. Preschool has an open enrollment for 2 year olds to PreK 5s. When your child turns 2, they are welcome to attend Preschool Sunday School. We do need parents to step in and help. If your child is attending these classes, you are required to work at least three times. If we don't have teachers, we won't have classes.

**K**id's Church – We are using Bible Study for All Ages. It is an incredible curriculum that allows us to use a timeline, maps, connection pages, and more. It may not be just like Kingdom Quest Sunday School, but the friendships and the close knit group learns a great deal as we study God's Word together. It is designed to teach in a different way than rotational. We meet at 11 a.m. in the Sanctuary, to be dismissed mid-service. This is by far the best curriculum yet!

**F**amily Worship Days – Family Worship days were designed for you and your family to attend service together as a family and to teach your child to worship corporately. They were not intended for you to "Take a day off" because there is no Sunday school for your child. These days are intended strictly for you to teach your child, as Deuteronomy 6 encourages you, to Worship the Living God, the One True God that desires your devotions and adorations here as a church family. As the parents, you are extremely important in your child's spiritual growth. You are with them more than anyone. Family Worship Days are not announced often ahead of time because they follow the major holidays.

**C**hildren's Room – Has your child cried during service and you are beside yourself? Or they just can't sit still for the hour? Or you are walking the commons waiting to get back into the service? You may be thinking, "Gosh, I really wanted to hear the sermon, after all isn't that why I came to church?" The children's room is available, at no cost, with trained, capable people who can comfort a baby or toddler very well. They are open from 8-12 every Sunday and during the Saturday service! The children have a great time together and sometimes don't want to leave!

**A**wana - If you have ever stepped into a swarm of bumble bees and heard the buzz, you know that you have stepped into our Awana Bible Club! We have very busy bees learning and reciting God's Word! These clubbers are dedicated to being here every single week to dress the theme, know the songs we sing for the Lord, recite His verses and take part in game time and their large group time. We have dedicated, God loving leaders who love working with the clubbers and enjoy their time with them. ■

*JANETTE SANNE is the Children's Ministry Director at St. Paul's. Contact Janette at [jsanne@crossandheart.org](mailto:jsanne@crossandheart.org) or 402-895-3366.*

**M**OPS is starting in August and needs some additional core people. We need people to help with finances, hospitality, child care workers to help moms take the much needed break, group leaders, publicity, and more. If you have the gifts and talents in any of these areas, please call the church office. Age doesn't matter here, we need a multi-generational group to help be the Titus 2 women of the church body, to train others to serve others, to grow others to train others.



# champsnews

## *A Legacy of Learning and Teaching*

**I**t was almost four years ago that I met Yvonne Stock, who started with CHAMPS as the nurse consultant/educator. She had just gone through the parish nurse training program with the Faith Community Nursing Network of Alegent to receive the parish nursing certification.

Now for someone who has been nursing for fifty years, a little more education may seem to be unnecessary, but if you know Yvonne, you know the journey is as valuable as reaching the destination.

For twenty-five years, Yvonne was the Coordinator of Nursing at Iowa Western Community College in Iowa. For the twenty-nine years prior to that, she was working in various private and public health settings.

Yvonne is, at times, likened to an encyclopedia of nursing information. If you ask, she will likely know the answer. What she doesn't know, she will Google faster than you can ask the question. It is the fun of learning that draws us to her. It becomes an

adventure, and with the availability of information and fifty years of experience, we have great discussions about the current state and future of health care and aging.

What many don't realize is that Yvonne is one of three coauthors of the Pharmacology for Nurses textbook that was just printed in its 15th edition. Textbooks come and go but hers is a standard for nursing, one that has stayed current and in use, relevant for today. It is an incredible milestone for any author to be published. When a book has fifteen editions, that only occurs because of the reach of its content and relevance to meet a need.

The most important side of this, though, is what Yvonne teaches us about learning and having fun connecting the dots of information to our lives and the intrigue of a life of learning. Exercise for the brain that keeps us young at heart!

*TOM ADAMS is the Director of CHAMPS, the Center for Healthy Aging, Ministries, Programs and Services. Contact Tom at [tadams@crossandheart.org](mailto:tadams@crossandheart.org) or 402-895-2244.*

*Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Colossians 3:12*

# women's conference

Are you ready for a new adventure? Do you need to spend some time with the Lord?

Then St. Paul's has just the event for you. The Women's Ministry/Community Outreach team is sponsoring a Women's Retreat, Cruisin' with the Sun, on January 30th, 2010. The cruise is from 10:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. with check-in beginning at 9:30 a.m.

The guest speaker is Cyndy Salzmann who is known as "America's Clutter Coach," and lives here in Omaha with her husband of 16 years and their three children. Her sessions will include "Packing for the Journey" which focuses on encouragement and practical advise on spending time with God each day as well as "Staying on Course" offering a system for letting go of the clutter in your life and your home.

We will have multiple break-out sessions throughout the day including Tai Chi, a Prayer Labyrinth, a Card Ministry Workshop,

"Splashed - Meeting God in the Water" which is a study of the woman at the well, and "The Captain's Table" which offers simplified themes to streamline mealtime.

We are also excited that the Sail-Away Spa will be joining us featuring hand and neck massages as well as warm paraffin hand dips and relaxing hand soaks.

The cost for the day is \$25 and includes lunch. If childcare is needed, it will be available on a limited basis at no cost. The registration deadline is January 22nd.



If you would like a registration form, please contact Lori the church office at 895-3366 or [Igraham@crossandheart.org](mailto:Igraham@crossandheart.org).

Don't miss your opportunity to join the cruise!

## January FROG Menu

January 6  
Walkin' Tacos, milk

January 13  
Soup, grilled cheese sandwich, crackers, fruit, milk



January 20  
Subsandwiches, chips, fresh vegetables, fruit, milk

January 27  
Spaghetti, garlic bread, salad, milk

## **A New Year's Resolution:**

### **Have a Good Heart in 2010!**

"A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart."

Matthew 12:35

**J**esus said that you can tell what is in a person's heart by listening to what that person says. He used the word "heart" to mean a person's true character and feelings. If someone frequently gossips, lies, and speaks negatively about others, you have a pretty good impression of his character. Likewise, you can easily guess the character of a person whose words are encouraging, kind, and truthful.

People can't see your heart, but they can see (and hear) what your heart produces. It's like the fruit on a tree. You know what kind of tree you're looking at by the fruit it produces. Jesus said, "A tree is identified by its fruit. If a tree is good, its fruit will be good. If a tree is bad, its fruit will be bad." (Matthew 12:33). Make it your goal to produce good fruit. And the good news is that we don't have to do that single-handedly... those of us who follow Jesus can call on the strength and power of the Holy Spirit to help make it happen.

So, the moral of this little story is: unlike a tree, each of us has the ability to choose the fruit our own life produces. What's your choice?

**See you Sunday! Gene**

*GENE FOX is the Director of Worship, Music, and the Arts at St. Paul's. Contact Gene at [gfox@crossandheart.org](mailto:gfox@crossandheart.org) or 402-895-3366.*

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## ***Healthy Living Ministry***

Announces new programming  
from the UNO LifeLong Learning Program

Life Long Learning Initiative Class taught by Will Austin (Increase your actual IQ by learning how to use cultural toolboxes to improve your cross-cultural communication skills) Thursdays - Jan. 14-Feb. 4, 7:00-8:30 pm

Life Long Learning Initiative Class - Troy Romero ( Autobiographical Reading & Writing) - Tuesdays, Feb. 16 - Mar. 16, 6:00-7:30 pm For more information on these classes, please contact the church office at 895-3366.

These programs will provide you with an opportunity to exercise your brain while having fun learning something new.

For more information, please contact Christ Rohlk, Member Care Advocate at 895-2224 or [crohlc@crossandheart.org](mailto:crohlc@crossandheart.org).

# welcanews

## THANK YOU

A HUGE Thank-you for St. Paul's support throughout the year. We had 51 sewing kits, 111 School Kits, 39 Health kits, 141 layettes, and 112 Mission kits sent to Lutheran World Relief. Your support in helping with Bingo at Good Samaritan, filling Christmas Boxes, and continually filling the Food bins and clothing bins for First Lutheran has been overwhelming! Saving personal health care items for Lydia House for Mother's Day bags has been Superb! Thank you, thank you, thank you!!!

*SID RAMES is the President of WELCA at St. Paul's.*

## ***Circles are welcoming new members for Bible Study and Fellowship.***

**Faith Bible Study:** 3rd Thursday, 6:30 p.m. Bev Renken, Chairperson, 895-4635

**Grace Circle:** 4th Monday, 6:30, p.m. Karen Hansen, Chairperson, 334-6892

**Hope Circle:** 3rd Thursday, 1 p.m., Polly Duffield, Chairperson, 895-4651

**Joy Circle:** 4th Tuesday, 1 p.m., Eileen Holly, Chairperson, 895-6743

**Love Circle:** 3rd Wednesday, 11:30 a.m., Ginny Janis, Chairperson, 331-0460

**Lydia Circle:** 2nd Thursday, 1:30 p.m., Ellie Kuhlmann, Chairperson, 895-3093

**Peace Circle:** 3rd Thursday, 9 a.m., Barb Moluf, Chairperson, 895-4496

There will be an Executive Board Meeting, Tuesday, January 12, at 6:30 p.m. at church. Please have a representative from each Circle represented.

## ST. PAUL'S READING GROUP

Our group meets the second Wednesday of every month in the library at 10 a.m. All are welcome to join us for lively discussion and tea. You may join us each month or just drop in when it fits your schedule.

- January 6—We will be at the church for a discussion of *Angel of Repose* by Wallace Stegner
- In February, we will be at St. Paul's library at 10 a.m. to discuss the autobiography *Long Trip Home* by John Grogan
- March 9—We will meet at the church at 9:30 to attend the book discussion of Joslyn's book club book *The Portrait of Mrs. Charbuque* by Jeffrey Ford and take the docent led tour of Joslyn's col-

lections pertaining to the book. Lunch at Joslyn Castle will follow our tour.

- April's discussion of *Hotel on Corner of Bitter and Sweet* by Jamie Ford will be at St. Paul's library at 10 a.m.
  - In May, we will discuss Bill Bryson's book *The Lost Continent – Travels in Small-Town America* at St. Paul's in the library
- Please join us! If you have any questions, call Sally Runge at 895-9239.



# membernews

## January Birthdays

**Members celebrating 80+ years of life this month:**

LuRee Nelson  
January 7, 1925

Dolores Alfons  
January 23, 1924

Donald Stroh  
January 19, 1927

## January Anniversaries

**Members celebrating 50+ years of marriage this month:**

Arthur and Lorene Andersen  
January 23, 1955

Don and LaVonne Plambeck  
January 14, 1956

Deryle and Mabel Heger  
January 1, 1950

**Congratulations on reaching these milestones!**

## OBITUARIES

**Beulah Jensen** was preceded in death by husband Lee and son Gary. She is survived by children and spouses, Steven and Sharon Jensen, Jacksonville, FL., Peggy and James Hawkins, Patti Jo Jensen, Mark Jensen, all of Omaha; 9 grandchildren; 4 great grandchildren.

Services were held at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Millard with interment at Voss-Mohr Cemetery. Memorials can be sent to St. Paul's Lutheran Church. At age 84, Beulah returned to the Lord on October 18, 2009.

**Berniece "Bea" Waniska** was preceded in death by parents Fred and Josephine Dettmer; sister LuEtta Dettmer; brother Earl Dettmer. She is survived by husband of 57 years, Frank Waniska; sons Fred Waniska, Robert Waniska and wife Becky; sister Helen Casey; grandsons Chad and Derek Waniska.

The celebration of Bea's life was held at St. Paul Lutheran Church with burial at Lincoln Memorial Park Cemetery, Lincoln, NE. Memorials can be directed to St. Paul Lutheran Church or The American Cancer Society. Bea entered the Kingdom of Heaven triumph on November 29, 2009 at the age of 80.

## BAPTISMS

Received in the waters of Holy Baptism this month were:

**Ryan Davis Cundall**, son of Bradley and Christine Cundall, born September 25, 2009

**Kyler Jackson Cohoon**, son of Andrew and Sharee Cohoon, born October 22, 2009

# What It Means To Be Lutheran - Part 3

*Continued from Page 3*

God. Most mainline denominations (like Lutherans) grew through the late 1950s. Many evangelical denominations grew in the 1960s and 1970s, but their growth spurt was short lived and most of them have joined the mainline churches on the plateau.

In the 1980s, many local churches wanted to distance themselves from the mainline denominations and the evangelical denominations. There has been a huge spurt in “non-denominational” churches in the last thirty years. The anti-institution sentiment of the 1960s had begun to hit the churches. Their worship format and musical styles are even less rooted in the traditional church and more adapted for the newcomer. Willow Creek Community Church near Chicago was a pioneer in this movement. They called it “Seeker Sensitive” worship. Recognizing that fewer people had roots in the church, but were still seeking God, they built churches around the needs of “seekers”. These were people who were looking for God but did not find Him in the rich traditions of the mainline denominations. Churches were built with no stained glass, no religious trappings – some even lacked a cross. Some nondenominational churches never play music more than ten years old, in an effort to be contemporary. Saddleback Church, with well-know Pastor Rick Warren, is actually a Baptist congregation with roots that can be traced back to the Anabaptists in the early 1500s – contemporaries of Martin Luther. They began the radical practice of “re-baptizing” adults who had been first baptized in the Catholic Church as infants. So in an effort to reach unchurched people, some churches dropped denominational labels all together.

There is a crisis in the American Church. The percentage of people attending church continues the drop. The pace of decline is increasing, with the largest drops in the last ten years. The largest “faith” group in America, and in Omaha, is people who practice no faith and do not attend any church. The number of people who profess a belief in God is dropping and the numbers who believe, but do not connect to any church, is growing. No one seems to know what style of worship will “work” in attracting the growing unchurched population. Not many of them listen to organ music on their I-Pod or use the word “kyrie” in daily conversation. Churches keep trying to adapt their styles to find the right mix.

I find it amazing that Martin Luther wrote about these matters in the Reformation. Shortly after translating the Latin Mass, Luther wrote “The German Mass and Order of Divine Service in January 1526.” There Luther argues for three styles of worship. The first style he argues for is the Latin Mass. Many of his people grew up worshipping in the Latin Mass and he thought we should preserve it, so that those who grew up with

it might continue to worship in a familiar way. That is the equivalent of our traditional worship service offered at 8 a.m. on Sunday morning. There is good reason for preserving traditions, but he also argues against only offering one style or one language. He said the Holy Spirit did not wait for the world to come to Jerusalem to learn Hebrew in the early church, but in the book of Acts, the Holy Spirit empowered the early believers to speak in a variety of languages on the day of Pentecost (sometimes called the birthday of the church). “How is it that we each hear in our own language?” (Acts 2:8) For Luther, this signaled that as the gospel went out to the four corners of the world, it should go in the language of the people listening.

Luther then argued for a second style called the German Mass. Luther wrote that this second style “should be arranged for the sake of the unlearned lay folk and with which we are now concerned. These two orders of service must be used publicly, in the churches, for all the people, among whom are many who do not believe and are not yet Christians. Most of them stand around and gape...” Luther was talking about the unchurched people of his day. He wanted to reach seekers in 1526. He wanted traditional worship for lifelong church people and he wanted contemporary worship to reach people who do not yet believe. He did not want the Great Commission to be just words on the wall of a church but our marching orders to actually go into the world and make disciples. He was also a proponent of using cutting edge technology (the printing press) to share the good news by printing the Bible in German so it was accessible to everyone. Today, he would use power point with video screens and have BLOGs on the internet.

Interestingly, Luther also argued for a third style of worship for what he called “earnest Christians” that would meet in small groups in people’s homes. “Here would be no need of much and elaborate singing, Here one could set up a brief and neat order for baptism and the sacrament and center everything on the Word, prayer, and love.” Luther was arguing for small groups in homes to pray and study God’s word, to baptize and share communion, and “do Christian works” in 1526! He went on to say he had not yet developed this third order of worship because he had not found many earnest Christians! Don’t you love it? If you are in a small group at St. Paul’s, you are cutting edge Lutheran!

Here is the question for us at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church and for the church in America and around the world.

What sort of worship should we practice? And for us, what does it mean to be Lutheran in our worship? Some might argue it would be preserving traditional worship, continuing to practice the order of service we grew up with. They would be right! Some might argue that we should translate forms of worship so

*(Continued on page 12.)*

# Happenings

## ST. PAUL'S EVENTS

(see enclosed calendar for more info)

### Friday, January 1st; CHURCH OFFICES CLOSED

In observance of New Years, church offices will be closed, Friday, January 1, 2010. Happy New Year!

### Thursday, January 21 Friday, January 22. HEARTS AND HANDS SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR

The Scholastic Book Company will be here for a Book Fair in the Family Life Center all day on Thursday and Friday. Come and check out their wonderful offerings.

### January 30th Sunday, January 31st CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

There will be a congregational meeting after all four weekend worship services.

### Saturday, January 30th WOMEN'S RETREAT

The Women's Ministry Outreach Committee is hosting Cruisin' with the Son on Saturday, January 30th beginning at 10:00 a.m. (check in at 9:30 a.m.) See Sower for more details.

## St. Paul's Worship Schedule

SATURDAY EVENINGS 5:30 p.m.

SUNDAY MORNINGS 8:00 a.m.  
9:30 a.m.  
11:00 a.m.

SUNDAY SCHOOL  
Children (to grade 5) 9:25 a.m.  
Youth (grades 6-12) 9:30 a.m.  
Adult 9:30 a.m.

SUNDAY KIDS' CHURCH  
Children ages 4 and up 11 a.m.

SUNDAY YOUTH GROUP  
Sword & Spirit  
(Grades 7-12) 9 p.m.

# What It Means To Be Lutheran

## Part Three

(Continued from page 11.)

they speak to the people of today in the language of today. They would be right as well! OMG! Luther was arguing for contemporary worship back in 1526. LOL!

Some people at St. Paul's have wrestled with changes in worship. In order to be a Lutheran Church, we must always be preserving the past and we must always be translating for the future.

To be a church of the Reformation means we must always be reforming. We no longer use either form of worship that Luther was arguing for – Latin or German. But today, if Luther were here, he'd be arguing that we ought to sing Johan Sebastian Bach and Michael W. Smith. It is rumored that Luther noticed singing with gusto in the pub on Saturday night and borrowed some of the musical styles (with new lyrics, of course) to write some of the early music of his beloved Evangelical church George Frideric Handel (composer of the famous Handel's Messiah) was a Lutheran but he might be listening to Twila Paris or Stephen Curtis Chapman if he were around today.

One problem we face is that many deci-

sion makers in the church grew up in a traditional church with traditional worship. We used to take pride that no matter where you went, Lutheran Worship was the same but that day is gone. Some of you know what I mean when I say "Green Book, Setting One". Your instinct is to preserve that form of worship and that works for you. (Keep in mind, the ELCA came out with a new red hymnal a few years ago, but we're still using what would be referred to as the "old hymnal." St. Paul's needs to deal with that at some point.)

Luther would also argue that to be Lutheran, we need to translate the "mass" into a form that speaks to the people of today. In addition to our traditional forms, we must worship in a format and style that people with no church background can understand what we say. They are the ones that the Old Evangelical (Martin Luther) would tell us we need to be concerned about. We must worship and share the Gospel in a way that makes sense to them.

*Pastor Lou* ■

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