

The Epistle

Saint Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church  
600 Mulberry Street, Scottsdale, Pennsylvania 15683  
Phone: 724-887-6526 (Office); 724-887-7962 (Parsonage)  
e-mail: [stpauls15683@live.com](mailto:stpauls15683@live.com)  
The Reverend Matthew Casey Stabe, STS, Pastor

### **November 2012**

God's Work, Our Hands: Stay with; Raise up; Send Out

---

#### **FROM THE PASTOR**

##### **Thank You**

\* To Sue Kotecki, Cheryl Mains, and everyone involved in planning and carrying out the Calendar Party that was held October 17. It was another successful event that raised about \$1800 before deducting expenses, and the money will be used for the Scottsdale Association of Churches Food Pantry. Good job!

\* You can thank me, again, for painting the backdoor of the parsonage. OK, hardly anyone sees it, but it is done! Now to get started on some of the interior spots that need to be done ...

##### **I Said It before, I'll Say It Again**

As I have said many times, mind reading, extra-sensory perception, clairvoyance and other powers of prediction are not required to be a pastor in the Lutheran Church! The HIPPA Law that went into effect in 2003 greatly limits what information can be given about patients of healthcare institutions, like hospitals and nursing homes. Therefore, if there is a pastoral care need, please let us know so that we can respond appropriately. Hospitals, nursing homes and personal care homes cannot and will not provide that information. Help us out, here, folks! Let us know when a loved one is in the hospital, nursing home, and so on.

Studies have shown that people who are active in a faith community – church, synagogue, mosque, etc. – and have a spiritual life and know that other people are praying for them, have a more positive outlook and a better recovery than those who do not. Also, know that there is healing power in the things of the Church: prayer, Holy Communion, laying on of hands and anointing with oil, and just pastoral presence – do not deny yourself! God has done pretty much what God is going to do in the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. The rest is up to us, God's people, to do God's work in the world. Let us bring God's healing power to you.

##### **Panera Bread**

There is a commercial for Panera Bread, the upscale sandwich shop, “nice” fast food place, bakery and coffee shop – bakery-cafes they call themselves – that I find very interesting. I believe it is Ronald Shaich, the co-founder and CEO of Panera, that is talking to someone out of

view of the camera, saying that they use real plates and mugs and cutlery at Panera, because they wanted the place to have soul. Sounds to me like they are on to something!

Meanwhile, back at the church, what are we missing? Real plates and mugs and cutlery and other things. If Panera is on to something with this, I believe that churches like ours might have lost something. Could it be that as we have increased our use of disposable stuff, not just for serving food, but cups for communion wine and other things, that we have been killing our soul a little a time? I believe that maybe we have been.

Could it be that as we give in to the “gospel of convenience” and increase our use of disposable stuff, because it is easier for us, that we have lost something valuable? What does it say about the value, the duration, the affect of Holy Communion on us, when we pitch the little cups we use for the wine? What does it say about us, when we are always choosing what will make it easier and more convenient for us, when Jesus calls us to follow him on a way that is often difficult and inconvenient?

Maybe we should not concern ourselves so much with things, but with that which is eternal. Easily said, not so easily done; and yes, we should be concerned with the eternal, but we have to live life in the present world. Some of us, myself included, are concerned about the environment and using our natural resources well. Reduce, reuse and recycle, the slogan is; and it is easy enough to reduce the amount of stuff we use, reuse things, and recycle things that cannot be reused, if we make the effort to train ourselves to do it. Of course, it begins with wanting to do it, and becoming willing to make the effort to do it. Are we willing to set up some containers, with someone “standing watch” over them, directing people what to put in which container? Are we willing to start using the dishwasher that is in the church kitchen? As it is, it does not get much use. An example: St. James Lutheran Church in Ligonier has the policy of only using reusable stuff, nothing disposable. Also, anyone using the church's social room for an event is expected to take the trash with them, since there is no outdoor container for the trash. Does that last sound familiar? We have many expectations of people using our building, maybe that should be one of them.

As Lutheran Christians, we believe that we are saved by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ, and what God has done through him – and that is all! Our own efforts do not save us, make us right with God, get us into heaven. In other words, God saves souls through Jesus; and our job is to make that good news known. But it seems to me that to save souls, we need to have a soul ourselves, and if our soul is diminished, weakened somehow, then how much of that can we do? Think about it: how can we go about rebuilding our soul?

### **A Sign of the Times**

You have probably seen these signs around and heard, seen this story in the news: the Ten Commandments on signs around this and other local communities, a response to the attempt by the Freedom from Religion Foundation to get a Ten Commandments monument removed from the property that Connellsville Junior High School is on. There are many people concerned about this, upset even, wondering how one such group can dictate to the rest of us and impose their beliefs.

This controversy goes back about 50 years to the US Supreme Court's decision about having a religious component to the school day in the public schools, which usually was something like reading a short section of the Bible and then a prayer. The Supreme Court ruled that this amounted to establishment of religion and ordered the practice stopped. “They took

prayer out of the schools”, as people say. Many people object to that decision still today, but to my knowledge, there has been no serious attempt to amend the US Constitution to allow for it.

This is what is at issue in the Connellsville situation. It is a matter of the law, constitutional law at that, and not a matter of what the people want. For the last fifty or so years, the courts have been on the side of not allowing religious displays of any kind on public land. Occasionally, a case is won where someone ended up going to court to allow a Bible study or prayer group to meet at a school, but always before or after school and not during class time, and participation has to be strictly voluntary. No one can be made to attend these groups.

I suspect that the monument at Connellsville Junior High School will have to be moved. I seriously doubt that they can win this challenge court. Now, if they had accepted the neighboring church's offer to take the monument and place on its property, that is a whole different matter. The atheist group that filed the lawsuit in Connellsville has said that putting the monument on the church's property was still too close to the school; that because it would be visible to students while outside the building, it would cause them distress. OK, but now that the monument would no longer be on public property, a public school at that, and so good luck getting moved. The Freedom from Religion Foundation would have to argue that the monument is in the same category as a spite fence or something similar – that it was placed there intentionally to cause distress, that it was a spiteful act.

Folks, these kinds of challenges are going to keep coming. As the world around us becomes more secular and people become less and less affiliated with any religion, we religious people of all varieties will need to “gird our loins for battle”, to use the biblical language. We will have to fight to keep our faith in the public square – at all. And at a time when church attendance continues to decline, we need to be in the public square more than ever. Let us have faith in God, who remains faithful, even when we are not.

### **At Canaan's Edge**

Last time, I mentioned a book that I have been reading, *At Canaan's Edge: America in the King Years 1965-68*. I finished it Monday (October 22), and from the many things of interest in this book about King, America in those years, the Civil Rights Movement, the Vietnam War, and all; two things in particular stood out. I had hoped to quote directly from the book, but as of this writing, I have not yet heard from the publisher, Simon and Schuster, if they would grant permission. Nonetheless, let me comment on two things.

One, on an incident that happened November 2, 1965 that I had not heard of before, involving a man named Norman Morrison, a Quaker from Baltimore, who burned himself to death outside the Pentagon office of Defense Secretary Robert McNamara. If that were not dramatic enough, Morrison had his one-year-old daughter, Emily, with him at the time, tossing her to a bystander as he doused himself with kerosene and then lit himself on fire. The (north) Vietnamese poet To Huu wrote a poem, “Emily, My Child” about the tragedy of war, inspired by this incident. Thirty years later, Emily Morrison, married and pregnant at the time, visited Vietnam with her mother, Anne, where North Vietnamese Army veterans and school children recited the poem from memory for her. However, an internet search from my computer did not turn up this poem. I hope to get permission to post it for you here from the book.

My point is to say that the Vietnam War was so controversial and unpopular, especially from January 1968 on (the Tet Offensive), that there is still much that is not talked about.

Granted, a self-immolation is particularly shocking, but that was Morrison's point – to get peoples' attention that something was seriously wrong, as early as November 1965.

Two, from the author, Taylor Branch's remarks about the years since King's assassination and the influence of the nonviolent movement King advocated, and the decline of violence as an effective means of resolving situations. I would like to have reprinted the last four paragraphs of the book here, but again, I have not yet received permission to do so.

Let me say this: Branch pointed out the many significant events that have happened since April 4, 1968 that were non-violent: students in South Korea compelling a dictator to hold regular elections in 1987; the collapse of the Soviet empire in Eastern Europe in 1989 resulting from dockworkers strikes and mobs of unarmed civilians tearing down the Berlin Wall. Earlier that same year, Chinese students inspired the world from Tienanmen Square in Beijing that planted the seeds of democracy in the Communist controlled, authoritarian state of China. In 1990, Nelson Mandela emerged from 27 years in prison to oversee the end of Apartheid in South Africa, and to become the first Prime Minister of the newly free South Africa, but without an Armageddon against the white former oppressors, but instead, a Truth and Reconciliation Commission that has been a model for the world.

Branch points out, correctly, I believe, that military force has been steadily becoming less effective for 200 years, a fact that is even acknowledged by today's military leaders. That is, while governments remain pre-occupied with military power and the use of spies to gather intelligence and all this, the Military sees the limits of its own power to keep governments in place and to achieve the ends of government.

And yet, at the end of his life, King stood almost alone at the head of the non-violent protest movement, his colleagues having grown weary of the sacrifice, or even having given up on the Movement to advocate “any means necessary”, including violence. In a time when some are calling for more spending on the military, we see that our military's operations in various places become less and less effective to achieve what they are there to do.

King and his movement, and the power of people gathered together and inspired to overcome oppression and adversity remain awe-inspiring. Let me suggest that we keep this in thought and prayer as we go to the polls on November 6 and consider whether or not to keep the President and Commander-in-Chief that we have, or elect someone else.

### **The Last Word**

As always, I have found plenty to say on these pages. Let us continue to find ways to make Christ known, serving the Lord Jesus in Word and Sacrament and Service.

*Pastor Matt Stabe*  
*mstabe@zoominternet.net*

**ST. PAUL'S CHURCH STAFF:**

*Pastor:* The Reverend Matthew Casey Stabe, STS

*Council Members:* *President* – Rev. Matthew Stabe, *Vice-President* – Red Kamer, *Secretary* – Dee Graft,  
Cathy Depta, Charlie Ellis, Linda Keefer, Sue Kotecki, Cheryl Myers, Brent Shallenberger, Joel Suter, Don Ulery, Jim Young, Becky Zito

*Church Treasurer* –Brenda Suter  
*Church Secretary* – Cheryl Mains  
*Janitors* – Dale & Cheryl Myers

*Church Financial Secretary* – Cathy Depta  
*Organists* – G. Carole Hunker & Nancy McNally

*Office Phone Number* – 724-887-6526      *Parsonage Phone Number* – 724-887-7962

*Church email address* – [stpauls15683@live.com](mailto:stpauls15683@live.com)

+++++

*Communion Assistants & Counters:* November - Dee Graft, December – Charlie Ellis  
*Altar Care* – November – Nancy Myers & Frances Sherman, December – Larry & Cheryl Mains

+++++

*Prayer List as of October 28* – Delores Bennett, Annie Eannotti, Gerald Peterson, Betty Shirer, Elsie Kromer, Beverly Winston, Betty Rolla, Dick Echard, Betty Neubauer, Donna Cross, Gladys Clegg, Brian Duffield, Brylie Craun, Kelsey Burger, Byron Kelly, Andrew Laird, Liberty Hernley, Jean Leonard, Jerry Younkin, Alex Zuzak, Doris Keefer, Pauline Sillaman, Alice Rugg, Wes Lindner, Eleanor Hess, Myron Chappell, Millard Hess, Michelle Marquis, Doris Dillon, France Denham, George Bowman, Ward Miller, Mabel Rolla, John Depta, Jack Connors, Sara Suter, Betty Smith, Donna Lyons, Kathy Miller

+++++

*November Birthdays:* 1 – Nancy Myers, 3 – Paul Baughman, 7 – Lucia Parker, Reta Suter, 8 – Kaitlyn Depta, Donna Keller, 10 – Kraig Suter, 11 – Elsie Kromer, 13 – Leroy Sherman, 14 – Daivd K. Hower, 16 – Melissa Mains, 17 – Gail Brown, Crystal Chambers, Steven Depta, 20 – Michael Rolla, 21 – Elizabeth Kuhns, Lora Ulery, 23 – William Depta, 24 – Ben Dwyer, 25 – Bob Marnell, 27 – Alaya Davis, Gerald Peterson, 30 – Elaine Myers

*November Anniversaries:* 1 – Robert & Jean Leonard, 27 – Edgar & Lucille Rolla

+++++

**HAPPENINGS AT ST. PAUL'S:**

**CONGRATULATIONS –**

**BIRTHS** – *To Mike & Erica Davis on the September 25 birth of a son, Wyatt Bonham. Wyatt weighed 6 lbs. 1 oz and was 18 1/2" long. Wyatt joins big sister, Alaya, grandparents, Walt & Sue Kotecki and great grandmother, Peg Cole and To Arron & Melissa Malcolm on the October 12 birth of a daughter, Quinn Arryn. Quinn was 8 lbs. 12 oz and was 21" long. Quinn's grandparents are Dale & Cheryl Myers.*

**MARRIAGE** – *To Jake Comerford and Audrey Graft who were united in marriage on October 27.*

THANK YOU – To everyone who made this year's Calendar Party a success. The proceeds will go to the Scottsdale Area Association of Churches Food Pantry.

*Mabel Rolla is now spending her winter with Michael. Her address is Mike & Mabel Rolla, 46 Valley View, Hillsboro, MO 63050-3915. PS - Mabel - See you in the spring.*

SPY KIDS! The November meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 14 at 6:00 PM. We are getting ready for Thanksgiving! The November clue is: It's almost Thanksmas Day!! What's Thanksmas day, you say?? Well, it's between Thanksgiving and Christmas, That's why we called it Thanksmas. We want to make life a little brighter, And some neighbor's load a little lighter. So bring a can or two, check out the bulletin – pick something from there, Let's get to work to show our neighbors we really do care!

*The Scottsdale Area Association of Churches Community Thanksgiving Service will be held at St. Johns the Baptist on Wednesday, November 21 at 7:00 PM.*

**It is that time of year that we are asking for donations for several things. First,** we are once again doing the Thanksmas boxes. These boxes are distributed to 30 families in the area (if you know of someone who is in need of a box, please let Pastor Matt, Sue Kotecki or Cheryl Mains know). The pickup date for the boxes will be on Saturday, December 1. We are asking for donations of: cans of green beans, corn, peas, cranberry sauce and medium size cans of sweet potatoes, packages of noodles and boxes of stuffing mix and hot chocolate. There is a box in the lower narthex for your donations. **And second,** Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Southwest PA Chapter #30723 is asking for donations of socks, underwear and new toys for children birth to age 18 for the Westmoreland County Children's Bureau. Donations can be put in the box in the lower narthex and will be accepted until December 7.

**SERVING ST. PAUL'S**

|                          |  |                             |
|--------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| <b><u>NOVEMBER 4</u></b> | <b><u>(HOLY COMMUNION/ALL SAINTS SUNDAY)</u></b>   | <b><u>ALTAR FLOWERS</u></b> |
| Greeters                 | Ginny Black & Virginia Ridenour                    | John & Cathy Depta &        |
| Acolyte                  | Jim Young  | Polcha Family               |
| Ushers – Team #1         | Charlie Ellis, Duane Stamm, Gail Brown & Dee Graft |                             |
| Lay Reader               | Tammy Kamer  |                             |
| Worship Assistant        | Linda Keefer                                       |                             |

|                           |   |                             |
|---------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| <b><u>NOVEMBER 11</u></b> | <b><u>(SERVICE OF THE WORD)</u></b>               | <b><u>ALTAR FLOWERS</u></b> |
| Greeters                  | Nancy Myers & Frances Sherman                     | Don & Vicki Ulery           |
| Acolyte                   | Daniel Beranek                                    |                             |
| Ushers – Team #2          | Larry & Cheryl Mains, Debbie Miller & Jerry Rolla |                             |
| Lay Reader                | Doris Butts                                       |                             |

|                           |   |                             |
|---------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| <b><u>NOVEMBER 18</u></b> | <b><u>(HOLY COMMUNION)</u></b>                        | <b><u>ALTAR FLOWERS</u></b> |
| Greeters                  | Walt & Sue Kotecki                                    | Carole Hunker               |
| Acolyte                   | Jaime Ellenberger                                     |                             |
| Ushers – Team #3          | Ginny Black, Virginia Ridenour, Linda & Howard Keefer |                             |
| Lay Reader                | Doris Butts   |                             |
| Worship Assistant         | Jim Young   |                             |

|                           |  |                             |
|---------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| <b><u>NOVEMBER 25</u></b> | <b><u>(HOLY COMMUNION/CHRIST THE KING)</u></b> | <b><u>ALTAR FLOWERS</u></b> |
| Greeters                  | Kent & Elinor Dusenbery                        | Betty Neubauer              |
| Acolyte                   | Skylar Rudberg                                 |                             |
| Ushers – Team #4          | Dale & Cheryl Myers, Nancy Myers & Cathy Depta |                             |
| Lay Reader                | Beth Shallenberger                             |                             |
| Worship Assistant         | Brent Shallenberger                            |                             |

|                                   |                         |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b><u>COMMUNION ASSISTANT</u></b> | <b><u>COUNTERS</u></b>  |
| Dee Graft                         | Dee Graft & Cathy Depta |

**ALTAR CARE**                      Nancy Myers & Frances Sherman

*If you are unable to serve, please let Pastor Matt or Cheryl Mains know as soon as possible.*

# November 2012

| SUNDAY  | MONDAY  | TUESDAY                       | WEDNESDAY   | THURSDAY  | FRIDAY    | SATURDAY                            |
|---|---|-------------------------------|---|---|-----------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>*CONFIRMATION CLASS FOLLOWING CHURCH (11)</b>              | <b>**THANKSGIVING SERVICE AT ST. JOHNS (21)</b> |                               |   | <b>1 Bible Study 7:00</b>   | <b>2</b>  | <b>3</b>                            |
| <b>4 Adult Sunday School 9:15 Holy Communion</b>              | <b>5 Dartball (H) Reformed 7:00</b>             | <b>6 Council Meeting 7:00</b> | <b>7 Lutheran Clergy Cluster 10-Noon</b>                                  | <b>8 Bible Study 7:00<br/>Hearts &amp; Hands<br/>Quilt Guild 7:00</b> | <b>9</b>  | <b>10 Scrapbooking 1:00 – 11:00</b> |
| <b>*11 Adult Sunday School 9:15 Service of the Word 10:15</b> | <b>12 Dartball (A) Everson 7:00</b>             | <b>13 WELCA 7:00</b>          | <b>14 Lutheran Clergy Cluster 10-Noon<br/>SPY KIDS 6:30</b>               | <b>15 Bible Study 7:00</b>  | <b>16</b> | <b>17</b>                           |
| <b>18 Adult Sunday School 9:15 Holy Communion</b>             | <b>19 Dartball (H) Tryone 7:00</b>              | <b>20</b>                     | <b>21 Lutheran Clergy Cluster 10-Noon<br/>**Thanksgiving Service 7:00</b> | <b>22 NO Bible Study<br/>HAPPY<br/>THANKSGIVING</b>                   | <b>23</b> | <b>24</b>                           |
| <b>25 Adult Sunday School 9:15 Holy Communion 10:15</b>       | <b>26 NO Dartball</b>                           | <b>27</b>                     | <b>28 Lutheran Clergy Cluster 10-Noon</b>                                 | <b>29 Bible Study 7:00</b>  | <b>30</b> |                                     |