

St. Paul's EPISTLE

April 2017 edition

Counting Up or Counting Down?

By Pastor Baur

When it comes to taking inventory of your life, how do you view each day? Do you find yourself counting up or counting down? See the difference? Counting up means that you go through life adding one day to the next, keeping track of how many days you have been given. With every day, the count gets larger. On the other hand, you can also count down, marking off each day like a checklist, knowing that the number of days left to live is getting smaller. Is that what the Psalmist is speaking about when he says in Psalm 90:12 that we are to count our days?



As you count up all those days of life, they turn into years and each year is a milestone of life. Our counting up includes celebrations like birthdays, anniversaries and accomplishments. The focus is on all that those days have brought us. They get us to look back and count up the blessings we have received, the days we have been given. As more and more days are added we find even more reasons to thank God for how he has blessed us throughout those days.

And while you are counting up, there is more counting that takes place. As we count up we are simultaneously counting down the days of life and the numbers are getting smaller. Such a reality can bring with it a sense of urgency, wanting to get the most of our days because they soon enough be gone. They may even have a real way of reminding us that we are mortal. But most important as we count down, we are brought another day closer to being with Jesus forever.

Life is not just a matter of keeping count and getting in as many days as we can. It is not a matter of counting down and getting this life over with. So no matter if you are counting up or counting down. Make every day count.

Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

- Psalm 90:12

God's House. Your Home.

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Sunday worship
at 8:00 & 10:30am

www.stpaulswr.org

Good Things from God

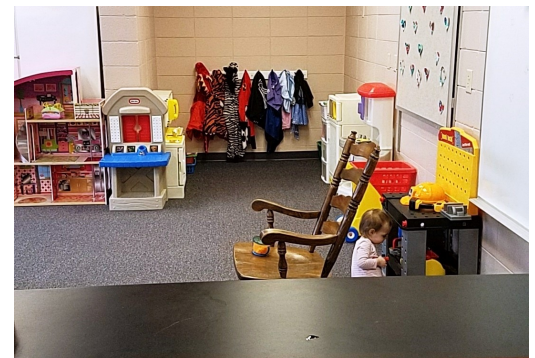
by Mrs. Hannah Mueller

"Praise the Lord, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name.
Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." - Psalm 103:1-2 NIV 84

This Psalm came to mind as I was thinking of ways to relay all of the changes that have been going on in our Early Childhood Ministry here at St. Paul's. We have been on the receiving end of countless blessings over the last several months, more so than on any average day. It's as though God has opened his hand of grace and has said, "Here! Here are all of these blessings; I hope you brought a big enough bushel basket." Well the truth is, we didn't bring a big enough bushel basket, and there's no way that we could. Our blessings overflow. ...and forget not all his benefits. First and foremost, our greatest benefit is laid out a little further in Psalm 103:3-5a "who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things." Our Early Childhood Ministry at St. Paul's has certainly been on the receiving end of those "good things." Here are a few of the benefits Little Lambs and our school's Preschool have received.

- Our Preschool enrollment for the 2017-18 school year has already been closed because the class is FULL. Full. In two weeks. We already have a waiting list started. This is amazing!
- We're worried about Kindergarten being "too big" next year. Our 4K retention is holding strong. If all of our projections are correct, we're looking at having to cap the Kindergarten class at 15 children!
- We've seen a big increase in inquiries in Little Lambs and our toddler-aged enrollment has greatly increased. We also have four more babies scheduled to start between the end of March through October with a growing waiting list.
- In order to better accommodate the current children in our care with a more developmentally appropriate setting and to allow us space to steadily grow, we've been given approval to add an extra room for 1-2 year olds! For those who may be wondering, this is to better accommodate the current children in our enrollment with the current staff. We just have an empty room and willing staff to make this happen. Our new age-level break down will have children ages 6 weeks through 1 year in our "Discoverers" Room, children ages 1-2 years old will be in our "Explorers" Room, and 2-3 year olds in our "Inventors" Room. These changes will take place April 3rd.
- We have an amazingly wonderful staff. Have you noticed how our classrooms look lately? You should check them out. They're a direct reflection of how dedicated our staff is and the effort they put in everyday to ensure that the children in our care are taken care of with love in the best environment possible.

Those are just a few of the blessings we've received, but as Psalm 103 reminds us, "and forget not all his benefits." Ministries take work and dedicated people to work them and make them successful. We do not want to forget that God has opened his hand of grace and is showering us with blessings. We are always in need of help and looking for ways to build the bridge between our childcare center and our church. Please consider volunteering or working in our childcare center; even if you can only do a few hours one day a week. Sharing the Gospel with these little lambs and their families is one of the greatest benefits of our Early Childhood Ministry! I look forward to trying to catch all of these blessings with you!

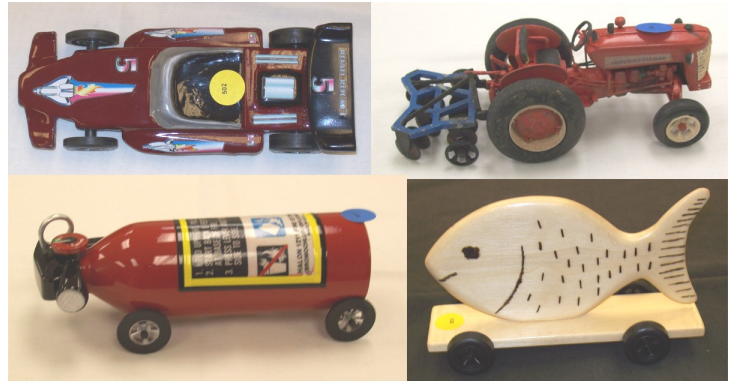


We Need YOU! By Kent Schroeder

We will be hosting the INTERNATIONAL PINECAR DERBY on APRIL 22 of this year. This will bring upwards of 300 people to our fine facility that weekend. Help is needed in various areas. There is something suited for everyone.

We need bakers to provide cookies for our concession stand. You don't bake? That's okay, we also need other food and supplies for the concession stand that you can donate. Want to help the day of the event? Great! We will need workers in the concession stand, we are asking for a 2 hour commitment from each volunteer. We also need judges for our craft cars. This involves a little of your time in the afternoon to choose the best cars in the Craft division. We will be needing people to be available around the building to answer questions and to make sure the participants have what they need.

This is a big deal for our Pioneers and our church. There are children from our church family who will be participating in either the craft or the speed events so come out and cheer them on. We would like to show the people that are coming to the Derby what a wonderful community we have. There are sign-up sheets located in the Welcome Center. Please consider coming and seeing what it is all about and helping for a short time. Please contact Kent or Kristie Schroeder to get further information. We need YOU!



Sample of previous International craft cars

National Handbell Festival Update

By Kristi Perry

In the February newsletter, you heard about how we are hosting the National Handbell Festival. National festivals only take place every three years. This year, we are holding it at Lincoln High School in Wisconsin Rapids, the weekend of April 29th & 30th.

Thank you to all who came to the informational meeting in February. Things are starting to take shape. Choirs and instrumentalists are learning their music, the Willing Workers, youth groups and individuals have stepped forward to help, and we have finalized the catered lunch menu, but the work is not done.

We still need more help with donations for breakfast and snack on Saturday. We also need manpower to help transport items to Lincoln and to keep everything organized and running smoothly at the high school that weekend. Look for sign-up sheets appearing soon in the Welcome Center for more specifics.

We are also looking for more voices for the vocal choir. If you know of any WELS members who might be interested in teaching themselves three songs and singing along with the bells, let me know. I have extra music I can share.

Finally, spread the word about the festival. We want lots of people from the community and surrounding areas to attend this rare and special event which will help celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. The festival concert is on Sunday, April 30th at 2:00 p.m.



Holy Week Worship Schedule

Palm Sunday
8:00 & 10:30 a.m.

Maundy Thursday
3:30 & 6:30 p.m.

Good Friday
12:10 & 6:30 p.m.

Easter Sunday
7:00 & 9:30 a.m.

St. Paul's School News

3K & 4K News – by Mrs. Hannah Mueller

First, we have a few updates! Our Scholastic Book Fair reward is about \$753 to spend on items for our playground. Willing Workers, our church's ladies group, also gave us a generous donation that will go towards that as well. Thank you for all of your contributions! If you haven't heard already, 3K-4K enrollment for the 2017-18 school year is closed. We filled up in just over two weeks and have started a waiting list!

Our classroom has been working away on being polite and using our manners, performing science experiments, observing what happens when snow melts (we even brought snow into our sensory table), using and identifying rhyming words through nursery rhymes and riddles, and we continued to practice our writing skills. For Valentine's Day we had our annual Valentine's Day Tea Party to practice our manners and being polite. It was a grand success! In addition, we've been working on our letters from A through U. Over the next few weeks we will continue working on our songs for the play, Stone Soup, which we will be performing with the Kindergarten class on April 7th at the St. Paul's Got Talent night.



Valentine's Day Tea Party

Kindergarten News – by Mrs. Trisha Engelbrecht

Come one! Come all! It's almost time for the 2017 edition of "St. Paul's Got Talent". This year our Kindergarten and 4-K classes will be delighting you with a classic, "Stone Soup", a tale that was published initially in 1947 by Marcia Brown. Many other versions have surfaced from different cultures such as axe soup, button soup, nail soup, wood soup, stone soup with Matzoh balls, and even bone soup for Halloween. Our tale will tickle your funny bone while serving up a heartwarming message. Three soldiers returning back from war stumble across a village while searching for food and shelter. Unfortunately, the townsfolk have no interest in sharing until the captain suggests they make Stone Soup for everyone. By the end, the townsfolk and soldiers work together demonstrating that anything is possible if we all work together. Our play will have its one and only performance Friday, April 7th. All the other classrooms will also be presenting that evening. We'll try not to hog the stage, but we promise nothing!

1st-2nd Grade News – by Mrs. Karen Obsuszt

It is hard to believe we have reached the end of the 3rd quarter. The students are growing so much physically, spiritually, and mentally. We are busy preparing for the talent show on April 7th. The 1st and 2nd grade students are preparing a number called the Evolution of Music.

We have been studying Life Cycles in Science. We have watched actual larvae turn into chrysalides and are now awaiting butterflies. We also are studying the plant cycle. The students were amazed that a bean would sprout with just water and no soil as we introduced the basics of hydroponics.

In English, the 2nd graders are busy learning about subject nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, articles, prepositions, and object of the prepositions. In 1st grade, we are learning what nouns, verbs, and adjectives are and how to use them in a sentence.

The 2nd graders have reached a milestone and are now working on the uppercase cursive letters in handwriting. The 1st graders are so excited to have just started to learn cursive. We are just learning the basic strokes so far, but they are excited to and eager to learn.



3rd - 4th Grade News – by Mr. Jon Engelbrecht

We are entering the final stretch, the fourth quarter, of the school year. Wow! Time has flown by this school year. Thank you to everyone who has kept our school and classroom in your prayers. We really do appreciate it. We are really starting to tackle some of the fun skills and operations in math. The third grade math class is working hard on multiplying and single-digit division. The fourth grade math class is pushing through all the different types of long division, and we recently started two-digit multiplication! Social Studies class has been fun as we examine the life and struggle for the early settlers and immigrants to our great state. We are truly blessed with the advances in technology over the years. It is hard for students to understand not having some of the simple conveniences of life like a washer and dryer, refrigerator, or a car. Do not forget to put "St. Paul's Got Talent" on your calendar for Friday, April 7 at 6:30 p.m.!



5th-6th Grade News – by Mr. John Quint

How many different machines does it take to pop a balloon or crack an egg? On Friday, April 7th, we're going to find out. As was mentioned in last month's newsletter, our 5th and 6th graders (and their teacher) have been using their knowledge of simple machines (levers, pulleys, inclined planes, etc.) to build Rube Goldberg devices. We have been busy constructing some pretty wacky contraptions, using odds and ends such as plumbing pipe, mouse traps, wood scraps, funnels, electric fans, marbles, BBs, and golf balls. The machines will be on display that Friday night at St. Paul's Got Talent. We'll have them set up in the hallway outside the cafeteria. After that, some of them will be on display in our classroom for a while, so stop in sometime for a private demonstration. The students (and their teacher) would be glad to show them to you. * * * As the end of the 3rd quarter approaches, we look forward to a busy remainder of the school year. Coming up shortly is the 5th through 8th grade spelling bee on Thursday, March 23rd, and the Academic Challenge at Northland Lutheran High School on March 24th. When we return from Spring Break, we'll be participating in the Northland Grade School Track Meet, we'll be going to the Dells for our annual Safety Patrol field trip, and we'll squeeze in a classroom field trip as well. I think after all that we'll need a vacation.

7th-8th Grade News – by Mr. Randy Pahl

Hello and welcome to "March Madness"! The 7th and 8th grade students are convinced it is appropriately named because there are so many activities taking place (or will take place) that it could actually drive one "mad". □ As we pen this article, there are still preparations being made for several upcoming events which include: the 5th-8th grade spelling bee, the annual Academic Challenge held up at Northland Lutheran High School, as well as the all-school talent show which is to be held on Friday, April 7. We are truly motivated and invigorated knowing that spring break is just around the corner!

In the classroom, our Christ Light lessons find their focus on helping us make responsible decisions in every facet of our lives. Government class has centered on immigration to our country both past and present. Science has us "spaced-out" as we distinguish between meteoroids, meteors and meteorites. In math we have not clashed on symbols of inclusion or operations involving integers. And, finally, in algebra class we have been involved with adding or subtracting fractions with binomial denominators.

In addition to all of the above we have reached the conclusion of the third quarter of our school year. It is hard to fathom that we are just two months shy of our 8th grade students leaving our school family. It is even more difficult to fathom that our Savior would shed His precious blood to save sinners like us! As we journey through this season of Lent, may His great sacrifice always be on our hearts and in our minds. And, finally, may the joy of the EMPTY TOMB remind us that because Jesus lives, we too will one day live eternally with Him in heaven! A most happy and blessed Easter to you all!!!

Am I a Leader? By Garth Perry, Church President



Am I a leader? Many people will ask that question and quickly respond, "I am not cut out to be a leader." I am writing to tell you to stop and think about this question before quickly responding that you are not right for the job. Think about the qualities of a good leader and if you may be the right fit for a leadership position.

First of all, leadership is often confused with action. True leaders see what needs to be done and know that it is important to complete various tasks. Doing the work is not the job of a leader. Leaders are responsible for making sure that shared goals are achieved. A leader will burn out if they try to do all the work themselves. A leader does not, and in many cases should not, do the work on the committees. He should oversee the work that is being done and make sure that it fits into the mission of the church. His goal is to equip and motivate committees and ministry groups for acts of service.

Leadership is not dictatorship. Leaders are called to be servants of the church. We are not called to dictate how the work needs to be accomplished. However, we are called to oversee and ensure that the work is done with excellence and not in a haphazard way.

How can you know if you are called to be a leader?

Here are some hints:

- 1) You want to make a difference and you want to do this intentionally with an end goal in mind.
- 2) You acknowledge what is the current status quo, but you also envision what could be and how to get there.
- 3) You encourage others and foster unity.
- 4) You value relationships more than tasks and can see the big picture.
- 5) You are quick to say, "I messed up. Now what can I do to fix the problem?"
- 6) You are a learner. True leadership requires the willingness to continue to learn.
- 7) You refuse to blame others for your actions and instead work to find solutions.
- 8) You realize that you don't have to be in charge to have an influence on the mission and vision of the congregation.

The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

- 1 Cor. 12:12, 27

Now with those questions in mind, how can women help?

Leadership is not a dictatorship. Men are not called to lord it over women. Women can certainly be leaders in the church. However, it is important to remember the biblical principle of headship. 1 Corinthians 11:3 says, "Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God." Scripture clearly lays out the structure of leadership – God, Christ, man, and woman. However, keep the principles of leadership in mind that I spoke about above. While council positions require male headship, women are welcomed and encouraged to lead and serve on committees and ministry groups in the congregation. Scripture shows many places where women served in positions in the church. 1 Corinthians 12 explains that we, the Church, are made up of many parts. We all have gifts to serve in different ways. This includes the women of our congregation.

Continued on pg 7

Am I a Leader? Continued

Please consider how you can serve in this congregation.

There are many open positions in the church both as leaders on the church council as well as committees and ministry groups. We are specifically seeking these chairmen positions on the church council: Board of Outreach, Board of Family Ministry, and Board of Worship. If we do not have leadership on the council, then ministries will suffer.

For example, how can we have VBS without a Board of Outreach chairman? The answer is simple. These ministries will not happen without leadership. As I stated previously, ministry must be done with excellence. The Board of Outreach chairman does not have to do the work of organizing VBS directly, but he does need to oversee the ministry and report the details and the council meeting. The council meeting minutes are then shared with the entire congregation. That is how ministry happens in our congregation.

In addition to those council positions, there are many other ways that you can serve. Speak with one of the pastors or members of the council to see how you can use your gifts to serve the congregation. Finally, pray for your leaders – both those that are called workers and those that serve as lay leaders in our congregation. Pray that God would grant them wisdom and guidance.

Across the Sea. Across the Street.

At the spring mission rally, you will find out about the synod's mission work in Albania plus learn how you can be a missionary in your own backyard. The rally will be held on Saturday, April 22 at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Marathon, WI. Pastor Richard Russow and Pastor Jeff Mahnke are the guest speakers. Registration starts at 9:00 a.m. with things wrapping at 2:30 p.m. The cost is only \$3 plus a freewill offering for lunch.

Special Gifts and Memorials

Through March 12, 2017

Cheerful Givers

- In memory of Tom Bushmaker given by Susie Dempze, Antony Brinkman, Bruce & Barbara Krueger, Daniel & Julie Appel, David Appel, and Friends & Family

Student Assistance Fund

- In memory of Cheryl Hafermann Alizadeh given by Edna Haferman

Stephen Ministry

- In memory of Lloyd Brock's father given by Susie Dempze

Easter Flowers

- In memory of Don & Hazel Pagel and Jim Bobrowski given by Sue Bobrowski



Counting Our Blessings

- Our Risen Savior!
- The baptisms of Emmaline Jo Meister & Scott James Lawless
- Eight couples attended the marriage workshop
- Little Lambs is growing and reaching more children with the Gospel.
- Another day!
- Our hygiene drive collection box was overflowing!
- To date we've paid over \$450,000 extra on the principal of our mortgage.



St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church
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April 2017 edition

Upcoming Events

St. Paul's Got Talent
April 7 at 6:30 p.m.

Holy Week - April 9-16

International Pine Car Derby
At St. Paul's - April 22

National WELS Handbell Festival
April 29 & 30
at Lincoln High in Wisc. Rapids



Pastor Martin Baur · 715-421-1424 · Pastor James Mumm · 608-780-7106