



# St. Paul's EPISTLE

December 2018 edition



By Linda Buxa

[www.timeofgrace.org](http://www.timeofgrace.org) | Posted November 2017

It's Thanksgiving, and many people will sit down at beautiful tables today, surrounded by food, friends, and family. Inside, though, some will be feeling an awful lot like Job, the man who sat down surrounded by the grief of losing 10 children, 11,500 animals, and a large number of servants. He sat, feeling devastated and scraping at sores that covered his body.

If that's you, what's the devastation you're sitting in? What makes you feel that maybe God isn't *for* you, but instead is *against* you? Loneliness, unemployment, unending physical pain? Divorce, death, addiction? A terminal diagnosis, depression, bankruptcy?

When you are filled with struggle, hurt, and loss, how do you face a day when an entire nation is telling you it's time to be thankful? On a day when even the Word of God is telling you to "rejoice always, pray continually, *give thanks in all circumstances*; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)?

You know what?

As Job sat there, he didn't know why God allowed Satan's extreme testing. Job didn't know he would have more children. (Not ones to replace the ten who died. He still mourned them until he went to heaven.) Job didn't know his health and wealth would be restored. Job didn't know how his story would end.

So he simply stated what he did know:

Continued on pg 2

God's House.  
Your Home.

- **Advent by Candlelight**  
pg 2
- **Parent Crosslink Magazine** pg 3
- **Classroom Highlights**  
pg 3-5
- **The Value of Supporting Ministry** pg 6

Sunday worship  
at 9:00am

[www.stpaulswr.org](http://www.stpaulswr.org)



## Salvation through Jesus

Midweek Advent

Services

Wednesdays  
Dec. 5, 12 & 19  
3:35 & 6:30 p.m.

Fellowship Suppers  
served 4:30-6:00 p.m.

## Start Seeing the Blessings continued from pg 1

“**I know** that my redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand on the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!” (Job 19:25-27).

While you're wondering how in the world you're supposed to be thankful today, remember that you have no idea how your story will end. You have no idea the plans God has for you. So start by saying what you know.

You know that your Redeemer lives.

You know he is coming back.

You know you will see him with your own eyes.

You know that God will work all things for his glory.

You know that the Holy Spirit is interceding for you—a fancy way of saying he's pleading to God on your behalf.

Once you state what you do know, it becomes a little easier to say thanks—even in the middle of your devastation—because you start seeing the blessings that he is working, even in the middle of your pain.

This Thanksgiving, if you're among the hurting, there's a whole body of believers who would be honored to pray for you.

*We would be honored to pray for you. Just email us, submit a prayer request online, or fill out a prayer request card during worship.*

## Advent by Candlelight

Thanksgiving is just around the corner, and that means that Christmas, with all its busyness and activities, is soon to follow. Plan now to take a break and spend a quiet evening at Advent by Candlelight. Women of the congregation are invited to attend this event on Sunday evening, December 2, 2018 at 6:00 pm. The Welcome Center will be transformed into a room full of beautifully decorated tables, complete with fellowship, singing, and dessert. The “guest” at this event will be Lydia, one of the Biblical women featured in the synod's newest movie release, “To the Ends of the Earth.”

What does Lydia have to do with Christmas? Come see how her story becomes part of His story. Each guest will receive a copy of the DVD for themselves, or better yet, to share with someone who doesn't know the true meaning of Christmas. This would be an excellent time to invite a friend or relative to join us for the evening.

Space is limited...signup sheets are on the Ministry Table in the Welcome Center. Admission is free, but a freewill offering will be taken, the proceeds of which will be divided between St. Paul's children's ministries and WELS Christian Aid & Relief. For more information or questions, call Barb Blum at 715-423-6514.

Christmas Caroling  
at Care Facilities



Sunday, Dec. 9  
Meet at church  
at 1:00pm

## Classroom Highlights

### Kindergarten News – by Miss Rachel Haugley

**Christ Light:** This month we have learned about The Promised Land, Joshua, and Gideon.

**Guided Discovery:** We have learned about the zoo, lights, Martin Luther and tried a few experiments.

**Reading:** We have learned 3 more letters: Dd, Ss, Ll.

**Sight Words:** We have learned 4 more sight words: on, in, is, and it.

**Special Events:** We took a field trip to Aspirus Riverview Hospital.

**Message from Ms. Haugly:** Volunteers are still needed to come and read to the Kindergarten class. (10:15-10:30) Books will be provided or can be brought from home. Come and show how fun reading can be!!!



Some 3K-4K students show off their Halloween costumes.

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

It is November and we are only a couple weeks away from Thanksgiving. We just finished parent-teacher conferences. I am so thankful to have such a wonderful group of parents to work with. It truly is a blessing to come to work every day and have 18 wonderful students that really are a great group of kids. Thank you for all the hard work that goes on at home.

At school we are continually working hard on our reading and have been learning what nouns, adjectives, and verbs are. The second graders have been busy learning to write “how to” paragraphs. This is fun. We realize the importance of following the proper steps in a recipe and how it can be an awful mess if you don't. We are really enjoying Social Studies. We have had fun talking about what the past, present, and future is. The students also made an invention that they would like to see in the future. Then we discussed our family tree. We each made our own family tree. They noticed and respected that everyone's family tree is a little different.

In Christ Light we are always learning that God's plan for our life is always better than our plan. There is nothing too big for God. We just need to always have faith in him. He loved us so much that he sent his own Son to die for us. We are thankful for all of our blessings and hope you have a very Happy Thanksgiving.

## Parents Crosslink Magazine

As a financial contributor to the WELS Commission on Lutheran Schools, St. Paul's is provided free copies of Parents Crosslink magazine. Digital copies were sent to school parents. If you did not receive a digital copy but would like one, simply ask Mr. Melso. A few paper copies are in the information racks near the church mailboxes. One article worth reading is the cover article on “Preparing Children for Success”. The article provides several suggestions for helping your child succeed. One point made in the article which is especially worth noting is the importance of reading to children. Articles on physical abuse and the benefits of memorizing the Catechism are also included in the autumn edition. Parents Crosslink magazine provides four editions each year, one in autumn, winter, spring, and summer. The future editions will be made available to you.



## Classroom Highlights

### 3<sup>rd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> Grade News – by Mrs. Destinee Fiecko

**Word of God:** We've been following the roller coaster of Israel's faith life while they wander in the desert and take control of the land of Canaan. We've started the period of the Judges, with Gideon's calling. It's always so interesting to review the kinds of people God chooses for leadership - usually those who are timid and insecure. What miracles God performs through unexpected servants!

**Language Arts:** In Reading class both 3rd and 4th grade have been able to dive into some really interesting nonfiction texts. At this age, kids are super interested in factual stories and can't get enough of them. I'm looking forward to seeing their love of nonfiction come through in future research projects! In writing we've been working on some creative writing using story starters, and continue to write daily in our morning journals. Soon our class will be putting aside their reading books in favor of some novel studies. 4th grade will be studying "Stuart Little" by E.B. White, and 3rd grade will be studying "Mr. Popper's Penguins" by Richard and Florence Atwater. Pick up a copy and join us for a book talk!

**WI History:** We've entered the 17th and 18th centuries, when the French explored this territory in search of trade routes to China. What they found instead? Beaver furs - a pathway to wealth and prestige in Europe. These explorers and missionaries began settlements and outposts to stake their portion of the "New World" for France. Soon we'll be learning about the American Pioneers, and will take a special interest in the Ingalls family.

**Life Skills:** With the physical movement to the "big kid" wing, 3rd and 4th grade has really had to step up in showing responsibility in the hallway and during transition time. Being courteous to your neighbors is a skill we're focusing on right now.

**Fun Stuff:** We're loving going outdoors during recess. "There's no bad weather, only bad gear!" Our students could really benefit from some outdoor-specific play supplies: things like kickballs, velcro mitt and ball sets, winter saucers and sidewalk chalk. Fresh air is so incredibly important for academic and emotional well-being! If you'd like to contribute to our outdoor experience, please contact me at [drfiecko@stpaulswr.org](mailto:drfiecko@stpaulswr.org).



### 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Grade News – by Mr. John Quint

Even though each school year is academically the same year to year, each class has its own personality which makes each year different and interesting. This year, our 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders have a passion for the game of chess – and they can't seem to get enough of it! During free time, we often have several games going at once, including one three-way game (played on a hexagonal board). The students have also made it their mission to defeat their teacher. Doing so results in their name being added to a list on a golden trophy, as well as a jackpot of candy that accumulates when their teacher wins a game. So far, 5 students have defeated the teacher, and others wait patiently to take their turn. \* \* \* For 5 weeks in October and November, former student (and current junior in high school) Josie Altmann has visited our classroom twice a week. Josie is studying to be a teacher and has been doing classroom observations to prepare. She recently taught an art mini-lesson, which the students (and their teacher) thoroughly enjoyed! God's blessings to Josie as she continues her studies.

## Classroom Highlights

### 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade News – by Mr. Randy Pahl

Our theme for November has been “change”! As we began our month, we needed to “fall back” by changing our clocks. It certainly helps to see the sun a little earlier in the day (if the clouds cooperate), but oh those nights seem so very loooooong now. How loooooong until we “spring ahead”?!

We are also changing seasons in the sports arena as preparations are underway for the upcoming basketball season. Practices have already begun and soon we will be participating in games against our four area Lutheran grade schools. Our first game is scheduled for December 14th at Our Savior's in Wausau. If you get the opportunity and can change your schedule, we'd enjoy having you come out and cheer on the Panthers!

In the world of academia, we've changed from the first 11 chapters of Genesis to our Christ Light lessons. We have noted how God has elected, redeemed and sanctified us so that we now lead lives that have been changed by the work of the Holy Spirit. In algebra, we have changed gears a bit by combining algebraic skills with geometric formulas and realized there's a “volume” of work to be done! 7th grade math has taken us to the never changing world of primes and composites where we have attempted to “factor” in some real life problems and solutions. Government class has found us making changes to the Articles of Confederation and forging a new constitution, while science has centered around the change from the geocentric to the heliocentric theory. Our final change has come in our daily routine. We have begun working on our songs and narrations for our Christmas Service which will take place on the 15th of December at 6:30 pm.

Lastly, some things never change - with Thanksgiving just around the corner we know for certain that the good Lord will continue to bless us and our families as we remember the countless blessings which He has poured out upon us. May we be especially reminded of the blessing of His changeless Son, our Savior, whose birth we look forward to with eager anticipation!

### 🎵 Music Minute 🎵

You're invited to attend this year's Christmas Service entitled "Christmas Around the World", which will be led by our schoolchildren on Saturday, December 15th at 6:30 p.m. The service shares the best news of that Savior, born in a manger, in many different languages. We will explore the true meaning of a Savior for ALL NATIONS as we sing carols and hymns from around the world. Join us in this glorious celebration!



### Events at Your High School

Journey to Bethlehem ~ Dec. 15 4:30-8:30 p.m.  
Groups are escorted through this living nativity.  
Reservations are necessary. Visit [nlhs.org](http://nlhs.org).

Christmas Concert ~ Dec. 16 at 3:00 p.m.

The NLHS Fruit Sale is underway.  
You can find brochures and order forms in the church office, at the NLHS, or online at [nlhs.org](http://nlhs.org). Orders due to St. Paul's by Nov. 28 or NLHS by Dec. 1.

## The Value of Supporting Ministry

By Garth Perry



I want to tell you a story about a young kindergarten boy not unlike some in our congregation or ones you may know – but there was something different. He didn't know Jesus the way that you and I do today. You see, his parents were Jehovah's Witnesses. Jehovah's Witnesses focus more on actions and the way you live your life rather than on the promise that Jesus has already lived a perfect life in our place.

Thankfully, God had a different plan for this boy's life and for his parents. His parents saw problems in the public school that he was attending (not that all public schools are bad – just this particular school). They decided to send him to a private school. That private school was a WELS school in Arizona. There he heard the true gospel message that Jesus lived a perfect life for us and there is nothing that we have to do to earn salvation in heaven. Christ our savior did it all for us. What an amazing message! He shared that with his parents through take home papers and singing at church services.

By now you may be asking yourself, why are you writing this story? This story is my story. My parents were Jehovah's Witnesses. However, by the Holy Spirit's power working through the faithful teachers who taught me and the pastors who faithfully preached and taught the gospel message, my parents came to faith. I was baptized in a chapel service in Kindergarten. My teacher even made cupcakes for all the kids in my class!

I tell this story not just to show how important it is for you personally to share the true gospel message with everyone you meet, but also for us to support Christian education in our school and in church. Without the teaching and preaching of our teachers and pastors, there may be souls that are not reached with that powerful message that I heard as a Kindergarten boy. Our mission at St. Paul's clearly states our purpose "... reaching out with the love of Jesus one heart and home at a time."

I also am writing this to stress that ministry takes resources. We often refer to these as time, talents, and treasures. For several months I have talked about how we need more people to step into leadership positions. Thankfully, many of those have been filled, though there are still open council and committee positions. This gospel ministry is not just the ministry of pastors and teachers.

This month I want to focus on the third "T." Ministry costs money. As you heard above, Christian education is near and dear to my heart. I know it is that way for many others in our congregation as well. This takes the work of both pastors and teachers. I shared some sobering statistics at the call meeting and in the church services on November 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>.

Our giving in October fell far short of expenses. If that trend continues, our deficit will grow to well over \$100,000. I think it is important to put that number into perspective. We are a large congregation. There are about 700 members in the congregation.

Continued on pg 7



### HOLIDAY WORSHIP TIMES

Christmas Eve  
6:30 p.m.

Christmas Day  
9:00 a.m.

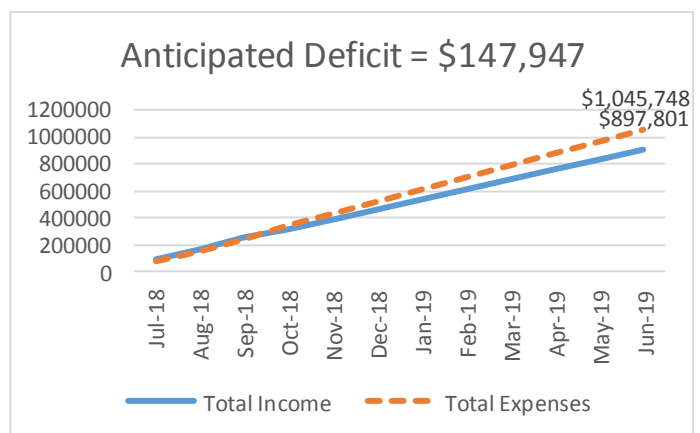
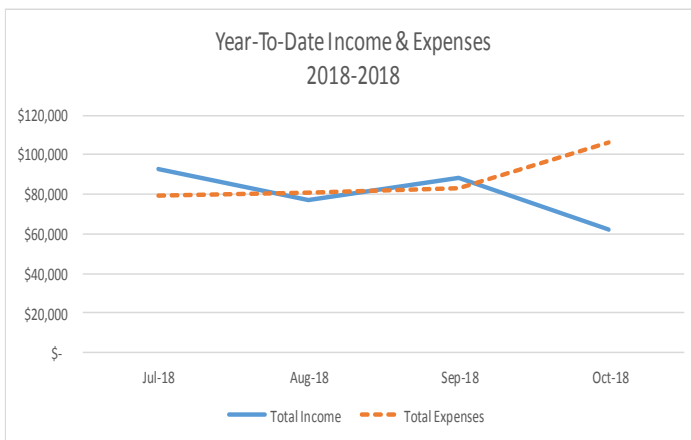
New Year's Eve  
6:30 p.m.



## The Value of Supporting Ministry continued from pg 6

If even a small percentage of members had it in their hearts to give a little more weekly, we could overcome this deficit. For example, if 25 people gave an additional \$40 a week, then it adds up to \$52,000. The same holds true for 50 people giving an extra \$20 a week. If that seems like too large of a commitment, consider this. If 50 people gave an extra \$10 a week or if 100 people gave an extra \$5 a week, then those each would be \$26,000. If we add all those together, that is \$156,000. Those are just a few examples of how a small increase can make a large impact on ministry.

Please take time to pray and consider how you give. Everything we have is a gift from God. He promises to bless our offerings and He always keeps his promises! Malachi 3:10 is a prime example of this truth, "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it."



## Special Gifts and Memorials

*Through November 11, 2018*

### Current

- In memory of Kay Britton given by Jack & Pat Fluno
- In memory of Judy Stensberg's mother given by Inge Johnson, Phil & Lynnette Wilson, and Marilyn Foley

### Pastor Teacher Assistance Fund

- In memory of Judy Stensberg's mother and Linda Jones' brother given by Tom & Barb Reitz
- In memory of Gloria Livernash given by Edna Haferman

### Mortgage

- In memory of Linda Jones brother given by Gary & Linda Jones

### Cheerful Givers

- In memory of Mike Foley given by Dave, Kathy, Laura & Ben Klingforth
- In memory of Linda Jones brother given by Barb Manz
- In memory of Gloria Livernash given by Bill & Elaine Wittrock



Called Home to Heaven  
Gloria Livernash



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December 2018 edition

## Upcoming Events

Advent by Candlelight  
Sunday, Dec. 2 at 6:00pm

Midweek Advent Services  
Wednesdays, Dec. 5, 12, & 19  
3:35 & 6:30 p.m.

Christmas Caroling  
Sunday, Dec. 9 at 1:00 p.m.

School Christmas Service  
Saturday, Dec. 15 at 6:30 p.m.



Let us come before him with thanksgiving

- Psalm 95:2

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