



St. Paul's EPISTLE

January 2019 edition

Huddle Up By Pastor Proeber

On a football team, what is typically the biggest key to success? You might think a great scheme, fast and strong players, youth, etc. However, you can have all those things and still fail without communication. Players and coaches need to talk to each other to understand how to achieve their goals. But it's not just



talking, communicating is purposeful listening which leads to meaningful action. Here's why open communication is so important on a football field: the coach gives the play to the quarterback. He tells the rest of the players in the huddle what the play is. They run the play. Regardless of how that play turns out, players share with each other things that went well or poorly. This communication helps determine what plays should be called again and which plays should be avoided. Typically, at least player-to-player, this happens in the huddle before the play is announced. Now what does that have to do with us as a church?

Matthew 28:19 is pretty clear that God wants us on the offensive side of the battle against sin and the devil when he says, "Go and make disciples of all nations." God gives us the playbook in his Word. He assigns different people to different "positions" (see 1 Corinthians 12). While the plans for how to move the gospel further "down the field" into our hearts and the hearts of others typically come through the pastor (quarterback), there are many points of view "on the field" the pastor simply can't see. There are some things I might think we should do that, through open and honest communication, I find out aren't the best ideas. Or maybe there's something you think we should be doing but haven't had an opportunity to talk about it yet.

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God's House.
Your Home.

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Sunday worship
at 9:00am

www.stpaulswr.org

Counting Our Blessings

- The light of God's love in this dark world
- New members
Raquel Liszt & her children,
Aaryn & Angel;
Randy & Carla Mayes; and Chris & Liz Cordrey
- Baptisms of
Emma Jane Knoll,
Caroline Elise Duerr, and Jacob Richard Radtke
- Hundreds of Christmas invitation distributed
- Over \$18,000 given to date for deficit reduction

Huddles with Pastor Proeber

With that in mind, in January and February, I will be holding "Huddles with Pastor Proeber." In these huddles, I will be sharing what our ministry plans are for the near future. I primarily want to listen, though. I want to hear from every person who is part of the "team" we call St. Paul's. Why? Because you have a different experience and position in the field than I do. Through these listening sessions, I hope we can all have a clearer picture of the meaningful action we need to take together so that God's name will be glorified as much as possible in Wisconsin Rapids and the surrounding area.

You will be able to sign your family up for a huddle in a number of ways: a sign-up sheet will be available in the Welcome Center; you can always contact me or the church on the various media through which we communicate (phone, email, Facebook, letter, etc.). Please try to sign up as soon as possible. I will typically be available Sunday through Thursday afternoons, as well as Saturday mornings and afternoons. I will leave openings for four families to meet together. This will give opportunity not only for fellowship, but also for families to hear different thoughts from other families that they otherwise might not have heard. That's an added benefit of doing huddles rather than individual visits.

Bible Class Survey

As an added bonus, these huddles will help me know more about you so that we can be more closely connected, held together by the Word of God. In order to help all of us be better connected to the Word of God, we are also going to have a Bible Class Month in March. Tucked in this newsletter, you will find a survey pertaining to Bible class and related topics. Please fill it out and return it to the church office as close to January 6 as possible. Your responses are valuable and appreciated.

You'll remember that we took a worship time survey a few months ago. I understand there was confusion and even frustration about how leadership handled the survey. On behalf of all the leadership, I sincerely apologize for not being completely clear about the survey's purpose. It was, along with the worship open forum, meant to provide information to the leaders so that we could make an informed decision on how we can best serve the community around us.

This Bible class survey is meant to do the same thing: communicate the thoughts of the congregation to leaders so that we are able to make wise decisions which fit the needs and desires of all we are called to serve. We will not be able to honor every single opinion, but we will do our best to address what we can with meaningful action.

We are in this together. We are moving "down the field" against sin and the devil. But we're not alone either. God isn't just coaching us, he enters the playing field himself. We clearly see that this Christmas season, as we start our yearly journey from the manger to the cross. God became flesh for us. And we know that God is with us in all we do. Pray boldly for his blessing and guidance. Only by his powerful grace will anything we do be successful.

Have a blessed Christmas and a restful New Year.

From Pastor Lucas Proeber

From the Principal

2019

A New Year is upon us. We have much in the past year for which to be thankful and much to look forward to in 2019.

We can be thankful for the Lord providing a full staff of teachers and a new pastor. With the great shortage of pastors and teachers in our synod, the blessing of a full school staff is beyond our realization. Filling one of our two pastoral positions is also a blessing. Many churches and schools have not been able to fill all their vacant positions. We have reason to give thanks. We can also be thankful that the Lord has provided 110 children that have the opportunity to learn about their Savior every day at school. We pray that the Lord will strengthen the faith of our future church leaders.

We have a pretty extensive "to do" list for the coming year. The Board of Lutheran Education (BOLE) continues to work on implementing our School Safety Plan. The BOLE is investigating the Wisconsin School Choice Program and how it can possibly benefit our parents and school. They are also investigating the benefits of becoming an accredited school. The school faculty is working on making improvements to our curriculum and instruction. We are beginning with language arts but over time will eventually cover the entire school curriculum. Mr. Melso will be using his time in January and February to visit with school parents to first of all provide encouragement but to also get feedback from parents on how the school can support their families.

Copies of the winter edition of *Parents Crosslink* magazine are now available. Digital copies were once again sent to day school parents. A few paper copies are in the information racks near the church mailboxes. Two articles that are worth your attention are *Learning from Mistakes* and *Preparing Kids for Christmas*.

Classroom Highlights

3K-4K News – by Mrs. Carole Melso

The preschool children have been "soaking in" the Bible lessons about Jesus' miraculous birth and the events surrounding that night. What a blessing it is to see the joy on their faces as we hear them talk about their Savior!

This month we spent some extra time learning the songs and recitations that we shared during St. Paul's Children's Christmas Service on Dec. 15th. All of the children, including the 3K children this year, participated in sharing the Gospel message. They especially loved our "Joy" song and "Rise Up Shepherds."



Our hallway and classroom are decorated with some awesome projects - some of them involving lots of glitter-glue and sparkles! Preschool is such a great time to have fun and learn at the same time. We focused on size sequencing with our Christmas tree projects and used candy canes and gingerbread men to explore some scientific properties. The sensory table has been a fun spot for learning about measuring and sorting, and encourages lots of scooping, pouring and sharing! We continue to practice our letter recognition and number skills with fun activities connected with our Christmas theme. If you hear bells ringing it could be us as we march around the room singing "Jingle Bells" with our bells held high! Thank you to those of you who have donated items from our wish list on the bulletin board in the hallway. We appreciate it! God's Blessings in the New Year!

Classroom Highlights

Kindergarten News – by Miss Rachel Haugley

Christ Light: This month we have learned about King Saul, David, and Solomon. Now we started learning about the prophets Elijah and Elisha.

Guided Discovery: We have learned about the birds, shapes, space, and snow this last month.

Reading: We have learned 10 letters since the beginning of school. C, O, G, A, D, S, L, I, T, and F.

Sight Words: We have learned 15 sight words since the beginning of school.

Special Events: We completed our Christmas program! It went very well and proud of how hard the students worked. I am grateful that we were able to share the story of our Savior's birth. Merry Christmas!

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

We wish you a very Merry Christmas from the 1st and 2nd grade classroom. We just finished the Christmas program, Christmas Around the World. All the students in the school participated and did a wonderful job sharing the good news of our Savior's birth. What a joy to listen to them after all the hard work they did to prepare.

The 1st and 2nd grade room is all decorated in paper chains hanging from the ceiling. The students get a link in their chain for every picture book they read or every 10 pages in a chapter book that they read. They are very excited about reading. In Reading/ English the 1st graders are learning about proper nouns and titles and just completed their 1st book report. The 2nd graders have been busy learning about nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs. They also just completed a book report.

In Social Studies we are talking about American History and our independence. We are introducing time lines and honoring our American heritage.

In Handwriting the 1st graders are still working carefully on their manuscript and the 2nd graders are just starting cursive, which they are very excited about.

In Christ Light we have been talking about how God has blessed us all with different talents and we should use them to glorify God. Just like Solomon did with his wisdom.

We pray that you have a most blessed Christmas!



The Meaning

What is life?
 What is death?
 Why would you want to stay on
 this earth,
 instead of being put to rest?
 So many questions and concerns,
 but answer this, for what do we
 yearn?
 With all the troubles and problems
 we get what we deserve.
 No one to care, no one to share
 the love we don't receive from
 anywhere
 If we were to die,
 if there were no one to thrive,
 We'd be in hell, unlikely to survive,
 The thrashing heat and gritted
 teeth.
 Instead, Jesus came and hung
 himself as a wreath.
 Taking our grief and pains,
 Spreading joy over the plains,
 Rescuing us from danger
 To take our fears away.
 We are like a grain,
 Him, loving us, all the same.
 He came for you and I,
 That we may shout for Joy!
 Now we can thrive and survive!
 With the Lord Jesus, by our side!

*By Riley Fairbanks
 Grade 7-8 Winner of the Helen
 Kroening Memorial Poetry Contest*

Classroom Highlights

3rd - 4th Grade News – by Mrs. Destinee Fiecko

Things we've learned this month:

Word of God: We have been studying some very interesting stories in the Old Testament, and now leading into the New Testament. As an adult, it's easy to forget some sections of God's Word that are the lesser-known stories - for instance, do you remember what Samson used to kill 1,000 Philistines? What about setting their crops on fire? Or do you recall how the young men died that had made fun of Elisha? What about Zechariah's discipline for doubting God's promise of a son? We can never graduate from studying God's Word. There are always fresh details and new lessons to learn!

Language Arts: We have wrapped up our novel studies in Reading class. 3rd grade studied "Mr. Popper's Penguins" and 4th grade studied "Stuart Little". We wrapped up the novels with a project choice and got to watch the movies. In English we have been working on a research project and look forward to publishing and presenting our work to our classmates.

WI History: Who loves the Little House series? We do! We were so excited to learn about early pioneer life and compare schools now and then. Next we move onto the Industrial Age!

Thanks to everyone who gave feedback regarding the Children's Christmas service. It was my delight to lead the students in learning so many fresh melodies and expanding their view on Christmas celebrations and traditions around the world. I am so proud of them. I hope you carry the joy of that Christmas message with you over the holiday season. Merry Christmas and Happy Epiphany!

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

It certainly is beginning to look a lot like Christmas! In our classroom, our new tree is up and has been decorated by students in the 6th grade. Stop by and see it! * * * Instead of spending money on ourselves for gifts for each other this year, we are collecting money to give to Mr. Jim Harris. Mr. Harris makes an annual trip to Laos to help make that country safer for its population. He is involved in an ongoing effort to identify and diffuse bombs dropped on that country during the Vietnam War. * * * In science, we are studying meal worm metamorphosis. Each student was given three meal worm larvae to study over a 10 week period. During that time, the larvae will become pupae and finally grain beetles. Students will be observing behavior and testing things like sense of smell, eyesight, and the ability to walk upside down. We have a permanent, thriving grain beetle habitat in our classroom. Stop by and see it anytime. * * * As the second semester gets underway at the end of January, we will be conducting our annual Soles for Jesus shoe drive. The school mission offering has been designated for this effort as well. Watch future newsletters for details! * * * On behalf of the 5th and 6th graders at St. Paul's, I wish you a most blessed and joyous Christmas and happy new year.

Who is He?

Who is he, that created Earth,
land, sky, star, and sea?

Who is he, that he sent his son
to come down and save me?

Who is he, that he came to
Earth,

born of a virgin mother?

Who is he, that he came and
died

to be my friend and brother?

Who is he, that he suffered hell,
to give me life on high?

Who is he, that he rose again
who lives that I will not die?

Who is he that he'll come
again,

in glory and in splendor?

Who is he, that he'll take me
there

to be with him forever.

'Tis he, my soul, 'Tis he,

Your Lord who saved you from
hell.

'Tis he, my soul, 'Tis he,

Your God who with you dwell.

By Logan Sellnow

Grade 5-6 Winner of the Helen

Kroening Memorial Poetry Contest

Classroom Highlights

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

Well, folks, may we be among the first to wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas and a joyous New Year. As we have reached the final week of the 2018 school year, we were once again blessed to witness the tremendous effort put forth by our 7th-8th grade students. Per usual they did an outstanding job of giving God the glory as they narrated their way through the Children's Christmas Service. May the good Lord bless their efforts (as well as those of grades 3K-6) in touching the hearts and lives of those who witnessed our service.

Well, it's official; we are full-swing into the basketball portion of our sports program. Our season has begun with the Coed A team picking up a road win at Our Savior's of Wausau, while the Coed B team won a thrilling 1-point affair. Both teams are now off until after the holiday break. Be sure to look forward to more action in 2019 as we will be competing in four home games this season (January 4, 11 and 25, as well as February 1). If you get the opportunity, come out and support our Panther teams. □ And, one final basketball update, our congratulations go out to Macy Vollert and Aaron Volden who each took 2nd place in their respective divisions in the annual "Hoop Shoot" which was held on Saturday, December 15th here in Wisconsin Rapids!

Back in mid-November we were blessed to have a former principal and educator from the DC Everest school district, Mr. Jim Harris, come and present the work he does in Laos to grades 5-8. After learning how their lives are so vastly different from ours, we truly appreciate the gift of living here in America. And, as 2018 draws to a close, we give thanks to God almighty that He have us the gift of His one and only Son that we might be saved! May this joy keep your hearts focused on Him this Advent season as we prepare not only to celebrate His first coming, but for when He returns again to take us to be with Him and all the saints in our heavenly home. Merry Christmas everyone and a most blessed New Year!

Got the Holiday Blues?



Life's circumstances can leave us feeling anything but joyful during the holidays. A job loss, a sickness, or a death can make us feel lonely and question our faith. You are not alone. We have trained

lay-counselors (called Stephen Ministers) who will walk beside you during this trying time. They will meet with you one-on-one and keep your situation confidential. Your Stephen Minister will give you time to talk and to wrestle with your thoughts and feelings without hurrying you or judging you. If you need a listening ear, please contact Susie Dempze or Mike Grosskreutz to be connected with a Stephen Minister—Susie (715-424-1324 or jcranby@gmail.com) or Mike (715-213-4114 or mgrosskreutz@tds.net).

Fill Our Shelves

During December, we were able to help three families with groceries through our in-house food pantry. However, this has left our shelves very bare. Any grocery donations you can make would be appreciated.



Being able to offer groceries to people seeking financial aid gives us the opportunity to share the Gospel with people that might otherwise never enter our church. We especially need: peanut butter and jelly; pancake mix and syrup; spaghetti sauce with meat; canned meats, pasta, chili, vegetables, fruit and baked beans; and boxed meals. (Think of things that do not require a lot of additional ingredients and are shelf stable.) You can drop off your donations in the bin across from the mail slots or in the church office.

In the Mailbox

Thank you for coming to sing Christmas carols with us. Thank you for giving us the devotions in a large print book. We truly appreciate that.

Have a blessed Christmas—
Tammy, Lynn & all at Our House on 16th

SWEPS thanks your church for the volunteers that helped during the days of Nov. 19th, 20th and 21st 2018. During those 3 days, 108 households were served for a total of 291 individuals in South Wood County. Six new clients were welcomed into the Pantry. We are so thankful for those who care about the well-being of our neighbors in this area.

Our needs are ongoing, so food and monetary donations are continuously and graciously appreciated. We also appreciate receiving paper and plastic bags as well as children's books.

Again, thank you for your help at SWEPS and supporting those in need in our area.

South Wood Emerging Pantry Shelf
Pat Baron, Assistant Operations Mgr.



Special Gifts and Memorials

Through December 16, 2018

Current

- In memory of Gloria Livernash given by Terry & Helen McAuley, Jack & Pat Fluno, and Clara Dockter
- In memory of Joe Feaster given by Randy & Pat DeBoer

Cheerful Givers

- In memory of Gloria Livernash given by Mike & Judy Anderson, and Carol Newsom

**St. Paul's
Pancake
Brunch**

Sunday, Jan. 6
9:00 am - 12:30 pm

sponsored by
St. Paul's
Pioneers

Potato Pancakes - Wheat Pancake - French Toast
Sausage - Bacon - Applesauce - Pie - coffee, Milk

Proceeds will be used to help cover the cost of Pioneer activities

**SUMMER CAMP
AT CAMP PHILLIP**

Register before camps are filled!
www.campphillip.com



With the Lord:
Kathleen "Kitt" Metz
Clair "Pat" Heideman



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January 2019 edition

Upcoming Events

Christmas Eve Worship at 6:30 p.m.

Christmas Day Worship at 9:00 a.m.

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

Pioneer Pancake Brunch
Sunday, January 6



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