

# THE QUARTERLY BLESSINGS

The Official Quarterly Newsletter of St. Paul's Lutheran Church & School

Available online at [stpaulmenomonie.com](http://stpaulmenomonie.com)

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## DATES TO KNOW

- April 5th - Women of St. Paul's
- April 6th - Maundy Thursday Service
- April 7th-10th - Office Closed for Easter
- April 7th - Good Friday Service
- April 9th - Easter Sunday Service
- April 15th - Congregational Facilities Planning Meeting
- April 21st - 6th-8th Grade Dinner Theatre
- April 28th - 3K-5th Grade Spring Fling
  
- May 1st-5th - Staff Appreciation Week
- May 3rd - Women of St. Paul's
- May 18th - Ascension Service
- May 22nd - Office Closed for Track & Field Day
- May 24th - 4K Graduation
- May 24th - Piano Recitals
- May 25th - School Picnic
- May 24th - School Closed Service
  
- June 7th - Women of St. Paul's
- June TBD - VBS

### BIBLE TRIVIA QUESTIONS

A) What did the woman pour on Jesus' feet at the home of Simon the Leper?

B) What day of the week did Jesus rise back to life?

Answers on page 8

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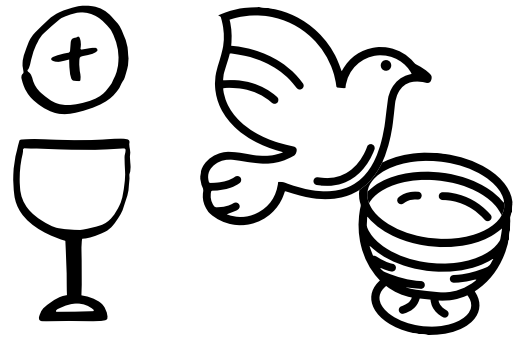
# WELS WORDS: STEWARDSHIP

by Pastor Geoffrey Kieta

A number of years ago, I was in a car accident. While my van was in the shop, a member loaned me a car. If I would have returned that car with trash scattered all around the inside, the fuel gage on empty, and a really bad smell coming out of it, most people would say that I didn't take very good care of it. To put it another way, I wasn't a good steward of something that was loaned to me.

Today's WELS Word is "stewardship." That isn't a word that we use very much outside of church. Stewardship is a fancy way of saying that nothing that we have really belongs to us. It all belongs to God. My house, my bank account, my church – even my wife and children are really only mine in the sense that God has loaned them to me, rather than to somebody else. God expects me to take good care of the things that he has loaned me.

What has God loaned us? First and foremost, God has loaned us his Word. Not everyone on this earth has them. Not everyone who has them takes care of them. We are good stewards of the Word when we revere it as God's own word and we take the time to study it and to understand what it says. We are not good stewards when we never open our Bibles or rarely come to church.



In the same way, God has given us the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We are good stewards of those gifts when we administer the sacraments in the way that Jesus instituted them and when we are faithful in using them. People who can't remember the last time they came to communion are not taking good care of God's gifts.

It may seem like being a good steward of baptism is making sure that all of the children we are responsible for are baptized. That's true, but it doesn't go far enough. Baptism is not a one time "dunking" and then it's over. Baptism gives us Christ, it washes away our sins and creates faith in our hearts. Baptism is gift that God intends for us to use on a daily basis, by constantly remembering what he did for us in it and drawing peace from that gift. If we never even think about our own baptism, are we being good stewards of it?

Our congregation is a loan from God which he expects us to take care of. Our stewardship of our congregation begins with our stewardship of the Word and sacraments. In order to teach the Word, we must be committed to studying it and to growing in our knowledge and our faith.

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# forgiveness

But that isn't the whole picture. If it were, the idea of Christian stewardship would probably make us more than a little uncomfortable. Who can claim that he or she has been a good steward of God's Word? How many of us can claim that we know that Word as well as we should or that we have been as faithful as God wants us to be in teaching it to others? What pastor or teacher or member can honestly say that he or she has always treasured the congregation God has loaned to him or her? Who can truly claim that he or she is as generous with his possessions and his time as God wants us to be? When we hear God's demand that we be more generous, more faithful, more forthcoming, well, we have to hang our heads and admit that we often just don't measure up. We don't deserve his generosity. We don't deserve the richness of the gifts that he has given to us.

But the wonderful thing about God is that he forgives us for not being good stewards of what he has loaned us. He forgives us for Jesus' sake. Jesus practiced perfect stewardship of all of God's rich gifts to him. Again and again, we see Jesus treasuring the gifts that God had given him – whatever possessions Christ had, whatever time was available to him he devoted to the Lord first. Jesus lived for the people around him – literally. Love caused him to come down to this earth and self-sacrificing love drove him to the cross for us.

Christ's devotion to the Word and to his church was without compare. God has given to us that perfect love of Christ. What is more, God has given us the death that Jesus suffered on the cross as the payment for our own failures in this area. God punished Jesus because we are not good stewards. God tells us that all of those failures are wiped away – they no longer exist!

Good Christian stewardship begins for us at the cross. We can be the stewards that God wants us to be because God has erased our failures. Jesus' resurrection assures us of that. In God's eyes, we are now the perfect stewards that Jesus was. Because we have experienced the love of God in Christ, we can look at all of God's gifts in a new way. That is God's promise to us. And in that promise, we find God's power to be the stewards God wants us to be.

Stewardship is really an opportunity to express our trust in what God has already done for us. It is also an opportunity to express our trust in what God promises that he will do for us in the future. God has promised that he will multiply all of our gifts to him. He has promised that he will bless us more richly than we can imagine for all that we devote to him. Stewardship is knowing that promise of God and trusting it enough to act on it. We can only know and trust that promise if we are in contact with gospel, the power of God to believe and to live according to God's promises. All Christian stewardship begins and ends in God's Word.

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# FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

by **Bob Buss**

St. Paul's Lutheran School is an amazing ministry which is approaching 150 years of serving community families in Menomonie. We are the only 3k-8 school recognized by the WI Department of Public Instruction in our county. The past few years have seen an increasing enrollment and the opportunity to offer much in the way of curriculum and programming that was not possible a few years ago. The school has been able to provide most of its budget in recent years and has been able to grow with little impact on the church's budget. The school will independently generate an amount next school year which nearly doubles the total church budget from four years ago. The school is nearly three times its size from seven years ago. God has certainly blessed our efforts to reach out to the community with a faith-based, distinctly Lutheran education. We offer so much that surprises families in intense Biblical instruction while also providing a great education.

Years ago, one principal noted to me at his Lutheran Elementary School, "We teach children the Word of God every day and every other subject is just the icing on top." I would say that focus in WELS schools today is not any less concerned with the Word of God, but we are taking academics much more seriously as the rest of our nation's schools have dove deeply into measuring student achievement scientifically.

The roots of data-based curriculum and instruction are from the scary 1982 Nation At Risk report from the federal government, which reported that at that time, two-thirds of students across our nation could neither read nor write at graduation, with the majority of the nation's adults at a second grade level. Our faculty does many things now that had not been done in WELS schools before due to lack of time and resources, such as formal curriculum studies, curriculum mapping, and data analysis. We also have the recent addition of offering programs like Miss Tinkey's Special Needs Scholarship Program position, which helps students who are behind in reading, math, need speech and language services, and the like. The art and science of teaching have dramatically changed in the past decade or two, but the heart of our school remains on the unchanging Word of God which makes children wise for salvation.

Our purpose statement from the school's Handbook for Families reads:

*St. Paul's Lutheran School exists to help carry out the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) of our Lord through formal Christ centered education in Early Childhood through 8th grade. God says to parents, "bring up [your children] in the training and instruction of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4), and Jesus said to the Church, "Feed my lambs" (John 21:15).*

Our faculty did a study of our test data for this year and we have some exciting results to report on academic achievement, because quality is indeed more important than quantity.

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I have created some charts to demonstrate how we have been able to improve our school's curriculum and instruction in these areas which academia terms "core subjects."

The state of Wisconsin measures reading scores for third grade students each year through the Forward Exam. It measures math scores for 8th graders. Other grade levels are tested, but those subjects in those grade levels are what they publish on public records. I have taken our scores and compared them to the Menomonie Area School District scores, the state of WI and have also placed St. Paul's scores from 7 and 16 years ago as a longitudinal measure of our school's process for continual improvement.

### **Third Grade Reading Scores (National Percentile)**

Wisconsin 2022 : 57	St. Paul's 2023 : 60
SDMA 2022 : 54.9	St. Paul's 2016: 48
	St. Paul's 2007 : 45.4

### **Eighth Grade Math Scores (National Percentile)**

Wisconsin statewide average : 52.5	St. Paul's 2023 : 58
SDMA 2022 : 61.7	St. Paul's 2016: 47.9
	St. Paul's 2007 : 57

There has been a decline in scores across the planet where schools were shut down in 2020-2022 in most areas. Thankfully, St. Paul's was able to continue instruction and did return to in-person learning in short order by the following fall.

It seems to have borne positive results in the end for our scores versus other areas of the country. Overall, Wisconsin has produced top tier math and science scores against the nation for a very long time.

Our state does maintain that lead today and our district is also quite high against the state results, but we know that Dunn County has produced strong math and science scores for a long time.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is an annual test which has been conducted since the early 1980's. St. Paul's has participated in that test a few times. It measures proficiency in reading and math for fourth grade students. Below is a chart from last year's results from NAEP and St. Paul's 4th grade MAP scores in the same areas. Proficiency is measured as the percentage of students in a grade level scoring at or above the learning objectives/standards and not against their peers as percentiles are calculated. It may be good to note that in these scores, St. Paul's 8th grade has 60% of its students as new to our school within the last 36 months. Our growth curve for assisting students who struggle upon arrival at our school is significant.

#### **Fourth Grade Math**

United States : 32%	SDMA : 54.9%
Wisconsin : 57%	St. Paul's : 62%

#### **Fourth Grade Reading**

United States : 35%	SDMA : 61.7%
Wisconsin : 43%	St. Paul's : 58%

We will continue to be good stewards of our time talents as teachers, and have done well in using the treasures provided through our school to improve student achievement. May God continue to bless our efforts. Our school is your school as well, and we appreciate your continued support of our ministry!

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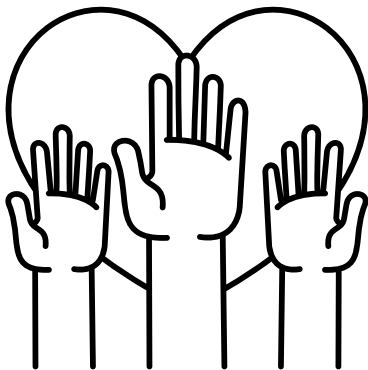
# OPPORTUNITIES AT ST. PAUL'S

## Spiritual Growth Opportunities

- Church Service (Sundays - 9:00am)
- Adult Bible Study (Sundays - 10:20am)
- Teen Youth Group (Sundays - 10:20am)
- Sunday School (Sundays - 10:20am)
- Campus Ministry (Wednesdays - 8:30pm)
- Women's Bible Study (Mondays - 12:00pm)
- Men's Bible Study (Fridays - 6:30am)
- Women of St. Paul's (1st Wednesday of every month)

## Opportunities to Serve at Worship

- Altar Guild
- Council Duty/Usher
- Sunday Morning Greeter
- Adult Choir
- Musician (all instruments welcome!)



## Opportunities to Support Our School

- \*\*\*Angel Fund Fundraiser Committee
- \*\*\*Tuition Assistance for Students in Need
- Teacher Relief/Classroom Assistance
- Art Program (donations, event volunteers)
- Hot Lunch Program (food donations, cooking, serving)
- Field Trip Chaperone
- Student Reading Buddy
- Assist at School Events

## Other Volunteer/Involvement Opportunities

- \*\*\*Vacation Bible School Leaders & Volunteers
- Encourage St. Paul's Workers
- Church Cleaning / Maintaining Our Campus
- Provide Rides to Church on Sundays
- Join Committees or Boards
- Visit Shut-Ins
- Dorcas Quilting Group

SPEAK WITH US TO LEARN  
HOW YOU CAN USE YOUR  
GIFTS AT ST. PAUL'S!

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## JANUARY-MARCH 2023 MEMORIALS

AMOUNT	IN MEMORY/HONOR OF	FOR
\$25	Mike Casper	General Fund
\$25	Sharon Wildner	Steeple Fund
\$20	Sharon Wildner	St. Paul's School
\$25	Sharon Wildner	Building Fund
\$220	Sharon Wildner	Garbage Disposal Fund
\$100	Emily Duesterbeck	Angel Fund
\$60	Emily Duesterbeck	Steeple Fund
\$25	Emily Duesterbeck	Adult Choir
\$125	Emily Duesterbeck	Building Fund
\$25	Bill Hayden	Steeple Fund
\$20	Bill Hayden	Building Fund
\$50	Bill Hayden	Garbage Disposal Fund
\$65	Tim Speidel	General Fund
\$120	Mary Buckley	General Fund
\$140	Mary Buckley	Building Fund
\$100	Carl Casper's Birthday	Hot Lunch Program
\$20	Donita Stanley's Father	St. Paul's School

## JANUARY-MARCH 2023 GIFTS

AMOUNT	FOR
\$2,250	St. Paul's School
\$3,365	Steeple Fund
\$500	Fellowship Tables & Chairs
\$250	Cemetery Fund
\$2,085	Building Fund
\$4,200	Angel Fund
\$50	St. Croix High School
\$1,000	Light for Stained Glass Windows

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# JANUARY - MARCH 2023 MEMBERSHIP SNAPSHOT

## Received by Baptism - 1

- Vivian Rhode

## Received by Profession of Faith - 1

- Ryan Wagner

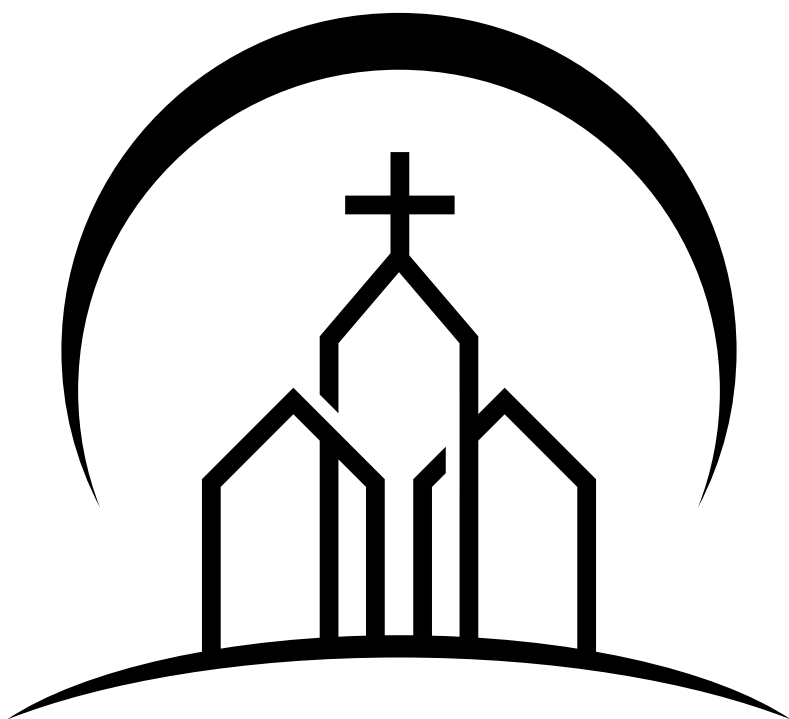
## Transferred in from Sister

### Congregation - 4

- Mike & Diane Werner from Wisconsin Lutheran Chapel in Madison, WI
- Bill & Michelle Ziche from Pilgrim Lutheran Church in Menomonee Falls, WI

## Home with the Lord - 1

- Mary Buckley



### **BIBLE TRIVIA ANSWERS**

A) A jar of expensive perfume

B) Sunday

Questions on page 1



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# THROUGH MY BIBLE IN 3 YEARS

## YEAR ONE - APRIL

1. Numbers 33-35
2. Mark 1:1-15
3. Mark 1:16-34
4. Mark 1:35-2:12
5. Mark 2:13-3:6
6. Mark 3:7-19a
7. Mark 3:19b-35
8. Mark 4:1-20
9. Mark 4:21-34
10. Mark 4:35-5:20
11. Mark 5:21-6:6a
12. Mark 6:6b-30
13. Mark 6:31-56
14. Mark 7:1-23
15. Mark 7:24-37
16. Mark 8:1-26
17. Mark 8:27-38
18. Mark 9:1-29
19. Mark 9:30-50
20. Deuteronomy 1
21. Deuteronomy 2
22. Deuteronomy 3
23. Deuteronomy 4:1-40
24. Deuteronomy 4:41-5:33
25. Deuteronomy 6
26. Deuteronomy 7
27. Deuteronomy 8
28. Deuteronomy 9:1-10:11
29. Deuteronomy 10:12-11:32
30. Deuteronomy 12, 13

## YEAR ONE - MAY

1. Deuteronomy 14, 15
2. Deuteronomy 16, 17
3. Deuteronomy 18, 19
4. Deuteronomy 20, 21
5. Deuteronomy 22, 23
6. Deuteronomy 24, 25
7. Deuteronomy 26
8. Deuteronomy 27:1-28:14
9. Deuteronomy 28:15-68
10. Deuteronomy 29, 30
11. Deuteronomy 31
12. Deuteronomy 32:1-47
13. Deuteronomy 32:48-34:12
14. Mark 10:1-16
15. Mark 10:17-31
16. Mark 10:32-52
17. Mark 11:1-19
18. Mark 11:20-33
19. Mark 12:1-27
20. Mark 12:28-44
21. Mark 13:1-23
22. Mark 13:24-37
23. Mark 14:1-25
24. Mark 14:26-52
25. Mark 14:53-72
26. Mark 15:1-21
27. Mark 15:22-41
28. Mark 15:42-16:8
29. Mark 16:9-20
30. Judges 1:1-2:5
31. Judges 2:6-3:6

## YEAR ONE - JUNE

1. Judges 3:7-31
2. Judges 4
3. Judges 5
4. Judges 6
5. Judges 7:1-23
6. Judges 7:24-8:35
7. Judges 9:1-10:5
8. Judges 10:6-11:28
9. Judges 11:29-12:15
10. Judges 13
11. Judges 14, 15
12. Judges 16
13. Judges 17, 18
14. Judges 19
15. Judges 20
16. Judges 21
- 17.1 Peter 1:1-12
- 18.1 Peter 1:13-2:3
- 19.1 Peter 2:4-17
- 20.1 Peter 2:18-25
- 21.1 Peter 3:1-12
- 22.1 Peter 3:13-4:6
- 23.1 Peter 4:7-19
- 24.1 Peter 5
25. Ruth 1, 2
26. Ruth 3, 4
- 27.1 Samuel 1
- 28.1 Samuel 2:1-11
- 29.1 Samuel 2:12-36
- 30.1 Samuel 3:1-3:41a

