

February

St. Paul's News

2018

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Ash Wednesday is nearly upon us! Lent has arrived as it does year after year. And every year the conversation is always "What are you giving up this year!?" Now that is well and good, and certainly encouraged as a form of Spiritual Discipline... but as I may have asked in years past, perhaps your goal could be:

What good thing can I add?

Rather than subtracting, what if we all added something? For the season of Lent I will volunteer at a soup kitchen once a week. For the season of Lent I will write a note every day to someone I care about to tell them why I appreciate them. For the season of Lent I will take up a collection for the women's and children's shelter. That for the season of Lent I will find a NEED that needs to be met, and I will do it. Not because my church is putting a program together, not because it's a fun social gathering for me and a few friends, but because I CAN. Because I should.

What if for Lent, the entire Church of God were to add acts of service for the people around them? Imagine what that might look like! I won't say that it's better or worse than giving up chocolate, or beer, or facebook, or whatever else you might GIVE UP, but how cool would it be to see what kind of real, tangible grace we could GIVE OUT!

So, you have two weeks to prepare. Two weeks to think and dream and lay out your plan for implementation. How can you use the season of Lent to give real, tangible grace through loving service to people around you?

Pastor

LOOKING AHEAD TO LENT

ASH WEDNESDAY is on February 14, 2018. On that Day, Ash Wednesday Service at 7 pm. Please plan to attend to begin your Lenten journey to the resurrection of our Lord on Easter Sunday.



St. Paul's Cleaning Ministry



We are truly blessed to have this wonderful place to meet, pray and worship our Lord and also blessed that our building is used throughout the week in various capacities for both St. Paul's and community meetings.

A couple of years ago, because of our ever diminishing funds, it was jointly decided to discontinue the church cleaning service and rely on member-volunteers to clean the sanctuary, Luther Hall, church offices, bathrooms, etc. Initially teams got together regularly, but as time went along fewer and fewer members joined the monthly group and eventually it just faded away. It has been noticed.

A new effort is being made to get cleaning back on track. We're working to prioritize areas and set up a schedule, and then we'll need some help. Men, women and teens are invited to join us. Job descriptions and training will be provided—no experience necessary, just come with a willing heart! Find how little time is involved (some jobs may take as little as 15-20 minutes) and experience how the Lord blesses us when we serve.

Homeless Shelter Needs

The Overflow Homeless Shelter housed at First Lutheran Church has an ongoing need for:

- Men's winter boots size 10 and up, gloves, hats, socks, underwear
- DVDs
- Twin-size bedding
- Coffee, tea, powdered creamer, juices, lemonade & Kool-Aid mixes
- Cereal, instant oatmeal, tuna fish, canned stew or chili, microwave popcorn
- Large plastic containers (Tupperware/Rubbermaid) for food storage
- Heavy duty plastic cups, bowls, plates and plastic-ware
- Duffle bags, TV tables
- Travel size soap and shampoo



DAVE RAMSEY 'S SMART CONFERENCE will be held in Boston, MA for a one day event on April 7, 2018. He taught (via DVD) the Financial Piece University which Pastor Gruenwald led a few years ago at St. Paul's. This would be especially good for those who took the course and any others that are interested. If you would like tickets and/or more information, please contact Pastor Gruenwald or Lori Seim.

Cluster Outreach Project – January & February 2018

The Schuyler Inn located in Menands is an emergency housing shelter for families. Many of these families are there as a result of severe financial difficulties or natural disasters (such as fire or flood). They often arrive with nothing but the clothes they are wearing and are in great need. During February please consider donating:

- .. Packages of diapers (all sizes)
- .. Baby wipes
- .. Diaper rash ointment
- .. Socks for adults
- .. Body wash
- .. Shampoo
- .. Toothpaste and Toothbrushes



Items may be left in the wicker basket in the rear of the sanctuary.

Thank you!

What is the 'Simply Giving' Program?

The Simply Giving program offers a variety of secure electronic payment solutions that allow individuals to make regular offerings and charitable donations. In addition to increasing donation consistency and reducing administrative work, Simply Giving helps families who take advantage of electronic payment options similar to what's available in all other areas of personal finance. It is administered through Vanco Payment Solutions which is extremely safe and security compliant, using Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Signing up is easy, it only requires a canceled check.

What are the benefits and why should you Consider Simply Giving/Vanco?

- Consistent giving, even while on vacation or unable to attend service...
 - ...Which improves St. Paul's cash flow!
- Reduction of administrative activity, especially when the electronic donation is monthly

When signing up for Vanco/EFT, you will still receive envelopes that can be put in the offering plate. And you'll have less checks to write!

Our Finance Team highly recommends 'Simply Giving'. Please see Anne Ragoni or Lori Seim if interested.

Thanks for your consideration!

Homeless Shelter Dinner Information:

St. Paul's continues to provide dinners in rotation with the Lutheran cluster churches for the homeless shelter at First Lutheran church. Joan Aldi has volunteered to coordinate our next meal, on **Tuesday, March 6, 2018**, please offer to assist Joan by making an entrée, side dish or dessert. Look for the sign-up sheet on the board the rear of the sanctuary.





FEBRUARY

1. JULIE ALEXANDER
7. SHIRLEY SCHMITT
14. Sarah Gebreyes
19. STEFANIE CALAMARAS
24. NICHOLAS ALDI
25. CHRISTOPHER SHELDON
27. THOMAS KINGSTON



GOD HAS ANSWERED THE PRAYERS OF ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH!

Their new pastor, Rev. Keffie Deen, will be installed on Sunday, February 11, 2018. Pastor Gruenwald will be preaching at Pastor Deen's installation.

Please check the Flower Chart for 2018. There are still several openings.

COFFEE HOUR—Tina Harris will be sending out the "Coffee Hour invitation" in the middle of February. Be sure to check your email and sign up for an item or two.



If you don't have email, please ask Tina if there is something you could bring.

ELDER
James Roberts

Many thanks to Tina, Chamberlain, and Braxton for all they do each Sunday to prepare and get Coffee Hour ready for all to enjoy.

DATE	FLOWERS	COMMUNION ASSTANT	SETRVICE STEWARD	ALTAR COMMITTEE
Feb 4	Muriel Brady in memory of Joseph Brady	Anne Ragoni	Nicholas Alexander	Frances VanAcker
Feb 11	OPEN	Chamberlain Harris	Nicholas Alexander	Arlene Huley Lisa Flanagan
Feb 18	Julie and Alan Alexander in celebration of their wedding anniversary	Chamberlain Harris	Braxton Harris	Arlene Hurley Lisa Flanagan
Feb 25	OPEN	Jeremy David	Braxton Harris	Alida Earl