

St. Paul Lutheran Ministries
2916 N. McKee Rd.
Merced CA 95340



“Connecting People to Jesus”

[www.stpaul
merced.com](http://www.stpaulmerced.com)

PAID

PERMIT #590
MERCED, CA

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN MINISTRIES

Mission: “Connecting People to Jesus”

MINISTRY STAFF

Interim Pastor
Rev. Mick Ista

HMong Ministries
Rev. Kou Seying
Vicar Doua Xiong

School Interim Principal
Dick Homann

Pre-School Director
Angelique Faulkner

MISSION & MINISTRY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Paul Cook
Treasurer: Kera Good
Secretary: James Nardello
Tina Orchard, Marilyn Anderson
Barbara Christensen

Elders: Kent Christensen,
David Lundin, Scott Chastain
Ed Mentz, Jeff George

How to reach us:

2916 N. McKee Rd
Merced CA 95340

Phone:

Church: 209-383-3301

Pre-School: 209-383-5672

School: 209-383-3302

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E-mail:

pastormista@stpaulmerced.com

pastorkou@stpaulmerced.com

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marianne@stpaulmerced.com

afaulkner@stpaulmerced.com

Website: www.stpaulmerced.org



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Elders Meeting, 6:00 pm Library	2	3 10:30 am Bible Class Transition Team Meeting 7:00 p.m.	4	5	6
7 8:15 am Bible Class 9:15 am Worship Farewell Potluck for Pastor Kou & family following the service.	8	9	10 10:30 am Bible Class	11	12	13
14 8:15 am Bible Class 9:15 am Worship 11:45 am HMong Worship	15 M&M Board Meeting 6:00 pm Library	16	17 10:30 am Bible Class	18	19	20
21 Father's Day Voter's Meeting 8:15 am Bible Class 9:15 am Worship 11:45 am HMong Worship	22	23	24 VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 9:00—noon	25	26	27
28 8:15 am Bible Class 9:15 am Worship 11:45 am HMong Worship	29	30	31 10:30 am Bible Class HMong language School thru 7/10 9-11 or 6:30-8:30 5th-12th grades only			

WORSHIP SERVICES:

BIRTHDAYS

June 2 Sandy Bishop
Ed Mentz
June 3 Terri Foote
June 8 Karan McKenzie
June 9 Nolan Vang
June 12 Zack Horrell
Mike Shepherd
June 16 Samantha Blaylock
June 18 Gillian Davidenas
Simon Davidenas
June 21 David Bultena
June 25 Don Kock

ANNIVERSARIES

June 9 Don & Elaine Kock
June 10 Larry & Jan Sorge
June 13 Gary & Karen Kelleher
Kou & Maykou Seying
June 14 George & Kathy Morton
June 15 Dave & Teresa Lundin
June 16 Richard & Christina Randall
June 17 Ed & Darlene Mentz
June 20 Hershel & Marion West
June 21 Russ & Irene Pearson
June 27 Edwin & Nicole Hair

BAPTISM BIRTHDAYS

June 6 Janet Seilnacht
June 8 Steve Blaylock
June 9 Kent Harstad
Danyale Cox
June 12 Rhonda Prothro
June 14 Samantha Prothro
June 20 Ed Mentz
June 27 Edwin Hair



Birthdays &
Anniversaries

GREETERS

9:15 A.M. Combined Service

June 7 Lorry & Dolores Hutton
June 14 Hershel & Marion West
June 21 Phil & Mary Rahn
June 28 Greg & Sandy Bishop

COMMUNION SET UP

Doris Alexander & Evelyn Williams

COMMUNION SERVERS

June 7
June 21 Gary Mortensen

READERS

June 7 Jan Sorge
June 14
June 21 Kaylene Mortensen
June 28

**HOSTS ARE NEEDED FOR
OUR FELLOWSHIP HOUR
AFTER WORSHIP.**



**PLEASE SIGN UP ON THE
CALENDAR ON THE WALL
BY THE KITCHEN COUNTER
OR CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE 383-3301.**

THIS IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT WITH GUESTS



SYNODICAL and OTHER NEWS

by Theresa Lund

THE CHANGING FACE OF MARRIAGE (LUTHERAN WITNESS--JANUARY 2015)

1970: Two men seek to obtain a marriage license in Minnesota. State Supreme Court unanimously rejects their lawsuit.

1972: Baker v. Nelson . Supreme Court refuses to consider Minnesota same sex marriage claim.

1986: Bowers v. Hardwick upholds state laws against sodomy.

1993: Hawaii Supreme Court rules in favor of plaintiffs seeking same sex marriage but stays decision to allow voters to decide.

1996: Defense of Marriage Act passes US House and Senate and is signed by President Clinton Provides that States have the right to define marriage and that for Federal Law purposes, marriage is between one man and one woman.

1997: Louisiana creates "covenant marriage" that couples can choose limiting basis for divorce. Arizona and Arkansas adopt similar laws.

1998: Hawaii voters pass constitutional amendment on marriage, the first of 31 states where traditional marriage was affirmed by popular vote.

1999: California becomes the first state to enact "the domestic partner" legislation after several local jurisdictions adopt similar proposals.

2000: Vermont becomes the first state to enact "civil union" law intended to create the legal equivalent of a marriage relationship but also affirms marriage as the union of one man and one woman.

2001: The Netherlands becomes first jurisdiction in the world with same sex marriage.

2003: Lawrence v. Texas strikes down state laws against sodomy. Massachusetts Supreme Court finds constitutional right to same sex marriage.

2004: First same sex marriage in US in Massachusetts.

2008: California becomes second state with same sex marriage by decision of State Supreme Court Presidential Candidate Obama says that he opposes same sex marriage. California voters approve Proposition 8 reaffirming traditional marriage.

2009: Vermont becomes first state to create same sex marriage by legislative action.

2012: President Obama announces support of same sex marriage. North Carolina adopts constitutional amendment for traditional marriage, the 31st state to affirm traditional marriage by popular vote. Maine, Maryland and Washington are first states to enact same sex marriage by popular vote. Initiative in Minnesota for traditional marriage fails.

2013: Brown v. Bushman, Utah's Federal court strikes down part of polygamy's ban. Another Utah's Federal Court invalidates Utah's marriage laws beginning a string of Federal court decisions striking down traditional marriage laws. LCMS IN CONVENTION PASSES RESOLUTION 2-07A "TO EMPHASIZE BIBLICAL TEACHING OF SEXUALITY < MARRIAGE AND FAMILY BY A VOTE OF 901-40. US v. Windsor strikes down DOMA provisions that defined marriage for federal law purposes, as one man and one woman Hollingsworth v. Lets stand lower court ruling against California marriage law.

2014: US Court of appeals in Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee becomes first federal appellate court to uphold traditional marriage. Nuyen v. Holder, NY Supreme court holds that an incestuous marriage between uncle and niece is valid.

WHEN WE REMAIN SILENT ABOUT TEACHING CONTRARY TO SCRIPTURE WE QUIETLY NOD OUR ASSENT.

NOTES FROM ST. PAUL SCHOOL

by Dick Homann, Interim Principal

This school year has gone by very quickly. To recap some of the events that took place this year:

School began August 13th. The Mog-jog was soon held. Grandparent's day and Coldstone Ice cream were enjoyed. Next came fifth grade to Hume Lake for outdoor education. Fifties night was very entertaining. The Christmas Program was outstanding. Lutheran School Week held some fun times. Many students were involved in the Junior Olympics. The school campout was lively. Then the end of school and promotion of our students completed the year.

Of course there were many more memories that could be shared. We are now looking forward to our new sixth grade as the school expands. This includes the completion of the portable classroom. The Solar panels are being installed giving shade to the Pre-school playground. Our new principal is taking over this month. Our new teachers are coming on board. This is an exciting time for St. Paul's Ministries as we go forward.

People often don't like change and the church and school certainly have had their share of change. This is the time we all need to thank God for all the blessings he showers on us daily.

On a personal note, I would like to thank you for all the support you have given to me these 2 years. I will remember the kind words and encouragement from you.

Again, thank you and may God continue to bless St. Paul.

ST. PAUL PRESCHOOL HAPPENINGS

by Angelique Faulkner, Preschool Director

This preschool year is coming to an end. It has been such a wonderful year. We have had so much fun getting to know our students. Sharing this journey of their life, the preschool years, has been a blessing.

They have bloomed and blossomed into wonderful learners excited to see what comes next!

We have shared the love and life of Christ with them in hopes that they will take Him wherever they go. And that the seed we have planted will be watered and nourished by those God chooses to put in their paths as they grow.

I wish so much that we could see where these kids are in years to come. I know God has great plans for each one of them. We praise God for the 2014-2015 school year. Thank you Lord for all that you have done and are going to do.

Have a blessed and wonderful summer!

Ms. Angelique



Construction on our 14th house is coming along very well. The exterior of the house has been painted, the interior walls are painted, kitchen cabinets are being installed, and the finish work is underway. We expect to do the dedication in June or July – watch the newspaper for exact date. This will be an exciting day for our new family and for Habitat!

Brush with Kindness applications are available online and we will be doing more projects as we have volunteers available. Homeowners, who aren't physically able to do small projects, should call us at 726-0850.

We have signed the paperwork for a HomeTown Buffet lunch on Saturday, Oct. 3rd from 11:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Tickets will be \$12 and available in August. Join us for lunch and help build more homes for our low income families our community.

We are in the process of obtaining two more lots to build on so many volunteers will be needed. If you have a group that would like to volunteer, please call our Habitat phone number 726-0850 or go to the website: www.hfhmerced.org to fill out the application form to volunteer. A Volunteer Orientation can be arranged for your group at your location and convenience.

If you have some expertise to share and would like an application so an interview can be arranged to be considered to be a board member, please check our website hfhmerced.org or call 726-0850 and have one mailed to you. We are looking for someone interested in fundraising, computer skills and legal expertise.

Each member of our board is responsible for a task, so it is a working board and together we work as a team to accomplish the goals we have agreed upon.

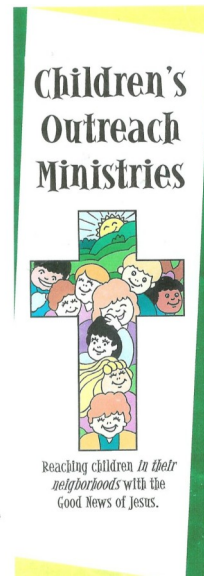
If you would like to visit one of our board meetings to see if this is what God has planned for you to do, please call me to add you to our agenda.

Jan Sorge, President & Church Relations Chair, 209-769-1884

Or email: merced-hostel@juno.com

CHILDREN'S OUTREACH MINISTRIES

IS GOD CALLING YOU?



We will have a training session **Wednesday, August 26th from 7-8 p. at St. Paul Lutheran Church library, 2916 N. McKee Road. So, if you are interested, please call me and reserve your spot and materials.**

Call Jan Sorge, Coordinator at **769-1884** or email: merced-hostel@juno.com

BIBLE CLASSES AND SUNDAY SCHOOL



Adult Bible Class
Sunday Morning
8:15 a.m.
Genesis
Led by Pastor Ista

CHILDREN & YOUTH STUDIES
K.I.C.K., Kids In Christ's Kingdom
K.I.C.K. Children's Church will be offered during the 9:15 a.m. service

HMONG BIBLE CLASSES
All at 10:15 a.m.
Adults - library

Broschool, K. Pm. I Parish Hall

Bible Class
Wednesday 10:30 a.m.
Church Library
Hebrews
Led by Pastor Ista

THRIVENT CHOICE DOLLARS

As of May, Thrivent members have contributed \$1709.58 to St. Paul through their Thrivent Choice Dollars. The local Thrivent chapter then uses these funds to help finance a variety of projects at church.

Please remember to continue to support St. Paul through your Choice Dollars. Contact Thrivent by calling 1-800-847-4836 and when prompted, say, "Thrivent Choice."

Thank you for your support.



CHURCH WOMEN UNITED in the Merced Area is a racially, culturally, theologically inclusive ecumenical Christian women's movement, celebrating diversity and working for a world of peace and justice.

Our mission is:
**"AGREED TO DIFFER, RESOLVED TO LOVE,
UNITED TO SERVE"**

Friday, Sept. 11, 2015 we will have our Human Rights Celebration with the theme "Journey Toward Peace" with speaker Debbie Johnson, founder of **WithOut Permission** located in Modesto. This will be at 7 p.m. at First Baptist Church, 500 Buena Vista Dr. Merced. For questions, please contact 769-1884.

They are coordinating their efforts with the Police Dept. Fire Dept. and training local volunteers to see the signs of Human trafficking and rescuing young adults. Come and bring your Youth Groups, parents, teachers, to learn what to watch for to help save these victims in our own community which are being solicited.

If you have any questions, please call Jan Sorge, President, Cell phone: 209-769-1884 or email: merced-

LUTHERAN WOMEN IN MISSION



WHAT IS LWML??



(LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE) also called Lutheran Women in Mission.

MISSION PROJECTS CHOSEN BY DELEGATES FOR 2014-2016

Twenty three projects were on the ballot, each delegate voted for seven.

The first to be paid are:

- 1 – Water filters for Kenya Communities sponsored by Holy Cross, Rocklin CA **\$6000 PAID**
- 2 – Outreach in public schools –Bible Clubs – St. Paul Merced CA **\$5000 PAID**
- 3 – Outreach to Chico State/Butte College students- Redeemer, Chico CA **\$2200 PAID**
- 4 – Bibles for the unchurched, impoverished children, teens & adults – St. Mark Kaneohe, Hawaii **\$ 5500 PAID**
- 5 – Joy of Harvest Ministries – Outreach to the Asian Community of northern CA –Trinity Lutheran – Georgetown CA \$20,000 **PAID**
- 6 – Fresh water Storage for Cambodian Trinity Lutheran Church & School, Battambang, Cambodia – Trinity Lutheran, Stockton CA \$ 4300 **PAID**
- 7 – Safe place to play for children/families Outreach ministry – Good Shepherd, Hayward CA \$ 12,000 **PAID**
- 8-Outreach Expansion to People with Developmental Disabilities – Bethesda Lutheran Communities, Redding CA \$1500 **PAID**
- 9-Helping Hands:Reaching Out to Families with Free Clothes and Christian Children's Books – Trinity, Redding CA \$4900 **PAID**
- 10-Angels Nest Child Development Center, Safety & Growth, Greenhaven, Sacramento CA \$7500 **PAID**
- 12-Spiritual & Nutritional Community Outreach Program – First Lutheran Church, Yuba City CA - \$5000
- 13-Graduate Studies for International Lutheran Lealers at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis MO - \$5000
- 14-Expanding Outreach to Native Americans on the Olympic Peninsula in Washington – Lutheran Indian Ministries - \$5000
- 15-Technology to Overcome Distance Issues – Alaska Mission for Christ - \$3500

If monies come in, the rest of the projects will also be paid in order of their votes. All projects will be posted on the LWML bulletin board in the Parish Hall as soon as they are available. **KEEP SAVING YOUR COINS AND PUT THEM IN A MITE BOX – OR IN THE BIG MITE BOX IN THE NARTHEX – EVERY COIN COUNTS TO COMPLETE THESE PROJECTS!**

WATCH THE BULLETIN & JULY NEWSLETTER FOR SPECIAL EVENTS IN EACH SEASON FOR ALL AGES

PRESIDENT'S NEWS

Dear St. Paul Congregation Members, Families and Friends:

“Have you never heard? Have you never understood? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of all the earth. He never grows weak or weary. No one can measure the depths of his understanding. He gives power to the weak and strength to the powerless. Even youths will become weak and tired, and young men will fall in exhaustion. But those who trust in the LORD will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.” Isaiah 40:28-31

These verses from The Book of Isaiah always come up at the right time and they came up as I was looking for songs to use for the last School Chapel Wednesday of the year. Trusting in him will make the weary have strength to continue on and move forward even in times where energy are low. Patience and faith in God always perseveres. There are a number of updates I would like to keep you a breast of as St. Paul Lutheran Ministries is going through transition.

The 6th Grade School Expansion has always been a top priority and continues to be for St. Paul Lutheran Ministries. St. Paul Lutheran Ministries started the school 25 years ago to serve this community and we look forward to doing that for many years to come. The road has been long this year and there have been setbacks which we have overcome, but we have work still to complete. The classroom will be ready before the next school year starts because it is in God's plan. The expansion is in the final stage of approval with Merced County Planning Department. With the diligent work of Mr. Galen Chastain, the expansion project is moving forward. We will still need help with electrical hookup, site preparation, sidewalk installation and cabinet installation. If you are willing to help or have connections, please let me know.

Principal Amy Mello is beginning to work with the teachers to get ready for the next school year. St. Paul Lutheran School is in good hands with her in the lead. Please pray for St. Paul Lutheran School as we move forward to get ready for the 2015-16 school year. Please let your family and friends know about St. Paul, you are our best advertisement. There are still openings for admission for next school year.

The 2014-15 school year is complete and we can close another chapter. Our teachers, staff and Mr. Homann are true blessings to St. Paul Lutheran School and I want to thank them for the countless hours they have dedicated to the school and our children. Our students are blessed to have them in their lives.

On Saturday, May 23rd, the Mission & Ministry Board of Directors had Joel Koerschen from the CNH District office do an informational meeting covering Policy Based Governance. The Board wants to better serve the Church by better understanding how policy based governance works.

On Friday, May 29th, the Mission & Ministry Board of Directors and Elders will be meeting with Pastor Ted Hartman to revisit Transforming for Mission (Revitalization) and looking at completing that project as the congregation moves forward with the transition.

Pastor Ista is on track to starting work with the Transitional Study Team the first week of June. Please pray for that team as God has given them a big job to do.

In Christ,

Paul Cook

2016 LCMS YOUTH GATHERING

In Christ Alone

Held every three years, the LCMS Youth Gathering provides thousands of youth and adults the opportunity to come together as a community of God's people to learn more about Jesus Christ, the Christian faith and their Lutheran identity. During the five days of the Gathering, youth spend time together in God's word, worship, service and fellowship with others from across the synod. The event is organized by LCMS Youth Ministry (<http://www.lcms.org/youth>) in Saint Louis, MO.

The 2016 Youth Gathering will be July 16-20 in New Orleans. If anyone is interested in financially supporting our youth, we would be very appreciative. Checks should be made out to St. Paul Lutheran Church with Youth Gathering referenced on the memo line. Please place your donation in the offering plate, give it to Marilyn Anderson, or send it to the church office. If you have any questions, please call Marilyn at 631-8965. We are still looking for more youth to join in this adventure. We have 5 so far, possibly 8.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Vacation Bible School will be held at St. Paul, June 22-26 from 9:00-noon for ages 3 through Grade 5. Cost is \$20 per child if registered by June 18; \$25 after that date or at the door. Each child will receive a t-shirt. The theme this year is "Mount Everest." Signup sheets will be available at the school and church office.

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN MINISTRIES

JOY OF HARVEST HMONG LANGUAGE SCHOOL

SUMMER COURSE 2015

5th-12th grades ONLY*

June 29th-July 10th (Monday-Friday)

Morning Session: 9:00-11:00 A.M. (White Hmong Only)

OR

Evening Session: 6:30-8:30 P.M. (White and Blue Hmong)

St. Paul Lutheran Church

2916 McKee Rd, Merced CA 95340



PLEASE JOIN US FOR A FAREWELL DINNER

FOR

**PASTOR KOU, MAYKOU,
GRACE, SARAH, SETH & MALACHI**

SUNDAY, JUNE 7, 2015

**AFTER 9:15 A.M. JOINT WORSHIP
with Pastor Kou preaching**

BRING A SALAD OR DESSERT TO SHARE

SIGN A QUILT SQUARE ON SUNDAY, MARCH 31 OR



2916 N. McKee Rd. • Merced, CA 95340 • 209-233-9443 • Ch: 209-383-3301

May 26, 2015

To our dearest friends and partners in the Gospel,

Greetings to you and your family as we approach this Season after Pentecost, which emphasizes a time of growth in the Spirit as the risen Christ is formed in His people.

The Board of Regents of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis has issued a call to me on Thursday, May 21, 2015, to serve as Associate Professor of Practical (Mission and Systematic) Theology and as Associate Dean for Urban and Cross-Cultural Ministry. As the titles indicate, the seminary has entrusted numerous responsibilities to this position. It involves teaching, overseeing several institutes, developing and integrating new mission and cross-cultural programs into the campus life and seminary curriculum.

It will be an honor for me to officially accept this appointment within the next few days with the utmost humility that words alone will not be adequate. The tasks will be quite daunting indeed, but it is a call from the Lord to use my lifetime and ministry experiences to assist the church and seminary together in the formation of pastors and leaders for generations to come especially bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to an ethnically diverse American population and the ever changing world of the 21st century.

I covet your prayers as my family and I prepare for this transition. As a part of ensuring a smooth transitional process for the ministry, the church has asked Vicar Doua Xiong to remain and carry on the ministry at St. Paul in Merced and continuing the outreach work in the District among the HMong and Southeast Asian people. The seminary has developed an accelerated program for Vicar Doua to complete his pastoral studies early from California without having to move his family back to St. Louis for the final year as it is the usual customary practice. Please continue to support the ministry that we began over a decade ago. Many in the hundreds had come to faith in Christ and many leaders had been formed for services in the church. I pray that the ministry we left behind will continue to bear much fruit.

Maykou and I along with our children simply say thank you! Without the love and support of our dearest friends and ministry partners, our last ten plus years of ministry would not have been possible. Many thanks and praises be to God for your partnership in the Gospel. To God alone be the glory!

Your servant in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kou Seying".

Rev. Kou Seying
Executive Director

Look What's Inside

Over the last few months, I have conducted around 30 interviews of staff as well as the names submitted to me by leadership for the transition team.

The transition team will consist of 10 people who are a cross section of age and tenure of membership at St. Paul. Some are on the transition team from the school population representing the concerns of that area of our ministry. Vicar Doua Xiong, Amy Mello, Heather Nardello, Irene Broughton, Kent Christensen, Scott Chastain, Kathy George, Meagan Christensen, and Mary and Phil Rahn have been selected to serve on the transition team.

Last week a note was sent out to all Transition Team members regarding the first meeting.

If you were interviewed for the Transition Team and were not chosen, be prepared to be called on as a resource person to help the Transition Team from time to time. Jan Sorge has been asked to lead a history gathering team of people to gather and give order to St. Paul's history for the Transition Team culminating in the first phase of a 75th anniversary celebration of St. Paul. At present, my plan is to commission the Transition Team on June 14.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, we have a great challenge before us. During this interim period we also have a great opportunity. I ask that you remember to pray daily for the Transition Team and that you prepare yourself to say "yes" when you are asked to assist us as we move forward to meet this challenge.

In His Service,
Pastor Mick Ista

Message	1
HMong Outreach	2/3
President's Message	5
LWML	6
Thrivent	6
Habitat for Humanity	7
Childrens Outreach	7
Bible Classes	7
Sunday School	7
School/Preschool	8
Synodical News	9
Birthdays	10
Servants	10
Calendar	11

