



ST. PAUL LUTHERAN MESSENGER

**November
2015**

Volume 16 Issue 9

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Dear Christian Friends,

German pastor Martin Rinkart served in the walled town of Eilenburg during the horrors of the Thirty Years War of 1618-1648. Eilenburg became an overcrowded refuge for the surrounding area. The fugitives suffered from epidemic and famine. At the beginning of 1637, the year of the Great Pestilence, there were four ministers in Eilenburg. But one abandoned his post for healthier areas and could not be persuaded to return. Pastor Rinkhart officiated at the funerals of the other two.

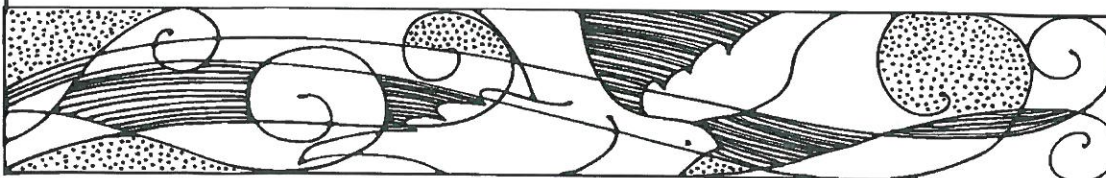
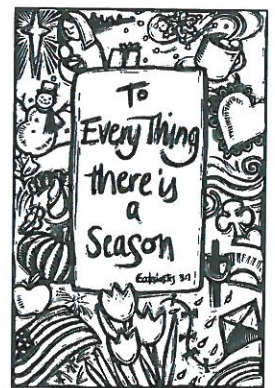
As the only pastor left, he often conducted services for as many as 40 to 50 persons a day—some 4,480 in all. In May of that year, his own wife died. By the end of the year, the refugees had to be buried in trenches without services.

Yet, while living in a world dominated by death, Rinkart wrote this timeless prayer of thanksgiving for his children:

Now thank we all our God, With hearts and hands and voices;
 Who wondrous things hath done, In whom this world rejoices.
 Who, from our mother's arms, Hath led us on our way,
 With countless gifts of love, And still is ours today.

It is my belief that Martin Rinkart began where we all need to begin as God's people regarding gratefulness. Gratefulness can truly begin when we recognize our condition as we stand before the cross of Jesus Christ and remember that the Son of God gave up His life for us because as broken as we are and as sinful as we are, Jesus still loved us more than we could ever imagine or understand. Another of our hymns states: "Nothing in our hands we bring, simply to His cross we cling." The only direction from that place is "gratefulness." Martin Luther said that we are mere beggars before the cross of Christ. Some beggars never get it. Here is the truth from God's Word: "that while we were yet sinners, Jesus died for us." That is where gratefulness begins. A blessed Thanksgiving to all of you!

Pastor Mick Ista





**NEWS AND NOTES FROM
ST. PAUL SCHOOL
By Amy Mello, Principal**

Thank you to all who were able to join us for "50's Night"! This fellowship event began in the fall of 2008 and continues to be one of the most anticipated activities of the year. Families come together to enjoy "diner" food and fun. We are blessed to have many members of the congregation support us by barbecuing and serving food, and this year had students from Merced High come and volunteer. We hope it grows larger in the coming years to include even more of the community.

We spent the last week of October celebrating reading during our annual "Read-a-Thon".

Students had fun dress-up days throughout the week and many special events. Many visitors came to read on "Guest Reader Day". Grade level qualifiers competed in the annual "Spelling Bee", and everyone got to dress as their favorite book character on "Character Dress-up Day". My personal favorite is pajama day - where we get to lounge and read all day long. Here's to raising students (and teachers) who love reading for life!

As we begin November we will focus on the virtue of **Stewardship**. In 1 Peter 4:10, Peter tells us *"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."* We at St. Paul are blessed and this month will have an opportunity to bless others by participating in the Salvation Army Shoebox drive. Our goal is to fill 75 shoeboxes for needy children in the Merced area. We know we can meet and even exceed our goal with God's help!

Annual meeting/potluck on Saturday, November 7th at 5:30 p.m. at

St. Paul Lutheran Church Parish Hall.

If your last name begins with:

A-G – bring a dessert

H-O – bring a salad or side dish

P-Z - bring a main dish

Special guest: Ashlee Williams Executive Director of WestSide Habitat at Los Banos and their ReStore manager who will share information with us on how to start a ReStore here in our area.

For more information, call 209-726-0850. Everyone interested in knowing more about Habitat for Humanity is welcome to attend.

Check out our website for further information on any of these events. www.hfhmerced.org and find us on Facebook Habitat for Humanity of Merced County.

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



Thank You to all Thrivent Choice Dollar Donors!

We would like to thank every Thrivent member who has designated St. Paul Lutheran Church as the recipient of their Choice Dollars.

As of October, Thrivent members have contributed \$2616.58 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."



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, November 6th – World Community Day/Annual Meeting/Installation of

Officers and Chairpersons

9:30 – 11:30 a.m. "Our Journey Together"

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

1345 E. Olive Ave. Merced

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

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, TWELVE HAVE BEEN PAID.

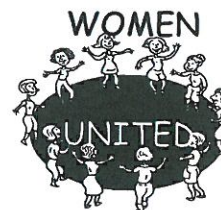
The following are yet to be funded by March 31, 2016.

13-Graduate Studies for International Lutheran Leaders 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!



ALL WOMEN in the congregation are invited to attend our monthly meetings. The next meeting is Monday, November 16, 2015. Devotions "The Advent Wreath" and the Quarterly Bible Study Topic "The Time is NOW" will be shared by all. We meet in the church library from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Mite box and freewill offerings are taken.

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.

Children's
Outreach
Ministries



Reaching children in their neighborhoods with the Good News of Jesus.

CHILDREN'S OUTREACH MINISTRIES IS GOD CALLING YOU?

We are going into our public schools for Discovery Clubs in elementary schools and Exploration Clubs in middle schools.

Volunteers are needed to be assistants and/or leaders. Call me and I'll do some small group training for a specific age group.

I have curriculum that is available for all age groups. Copies can be made as we have permission to do so. Snacks are provided as I have money left from the grant to pay for any supplies we need.

This is a mission opportunity right here at home and we have hundreds of children who DO NOT KNOW WHO JESUS IS!!! They are amazed when they hear about Him!

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

BIBLE CLASSES AND SUNDAY SCHOOL



HMong Bible Classes
9:15—10:15 a.m.

**HMong Women's
Bible Class**
6:30 p.m.

Both classes meet on
Sunday in the library.

Bible Song (Sunday School)
9:15—10:15 a.m.

Meet in the Parish Hall and walk
over to the classroom in the
School Music Room.

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



Celebrate Our Heritage

This is an exciting year for St. Paul Lutheran Church as we celebrate three outstanding anniversaries! Our church - 75th anniversary - our school is celebrating 25th years – and Lutheran Women’s Missionary Society 65 years!

We would like to invite you to attend this very special celebration with us!

Sunday, November 1, 2015

1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

St. Paul Lutheran Church

2916 N. McKee Rd.

Merced CA 95340

1-2 P.M. Worship in the Sanctuary

Rev. Dr. Robert Newton, California Nevada Hawaii District President will preach

Rev. Prof. Kou Seying, Lutheran Foundation Professor of Urban and Cross-Cultural Ministry

Concordia Seminary St. Louis, will be the liturgist

HMong Choir and School Choir

2-3 P.M. Recognition of special events & people

Ancestors of Gustav Polzin whose home was the beginning of our church

First Baptisms, Confirmation classes, Marriages in each of the three locations

Women’s Club House, 23rd & P St., 2916 N. McKee Rd.

3-4 P.M. Light refreshments in the Parish Hall

Display of pictures around the room –of previous years –

Fellowship and memories

If you have questions or need more details, please feel free to call Jan Sorge 209-769-1884.

We look forward to having you join us for this very special occasion!

History Research Committee:

Doris Alexander, Carol Kellogg, Elaine Kock, Mary Wallace,

Evelyn Williams, Theresa Lund, Rosie Martin,

Lona Sancibrian and Jan Sorge

PRESIDENT'S NEWS

Dear St. Paul Congregation Members, Families and Friends:

St. Paul Lutheran Ministries is God's Church and He created it to allow us to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ to the people of this community. This year marks a milestone for St. Paul with the 75th anniversary for the congregation and 25 years for the school. We look forward to the Anniversary celebration on Sunday, November 1st. I hope you can make it.

The past 10 months has been a busy time at St. Paul. Most recently, our action points are:

- Two Worship Services
- Fellowship Hour
- Children's Ministry - "Bible Song"
- Head to Heart (confirmation)
- Policy Based Governance Review and Updating
- New Music Ministry
- Interim Pastoral Care
- Transition Team developments
- Church/School Kitchen Remodeling

The Mission & Ministry Board of Directors have been given the task of nominating a call committee to search for the next Senior Pastor. The Transition Team has gathered information and will make that available to a committee soon. The nominations for the call committee will be brought to the voters for approval. Please look for a voter meeting in the near future.

Please continue to pray for St. Paul Lutheran Ministries. There can never be enough meaningful prayer asking God to provide for St. Paul Lutheran Ministries.

In Christ,

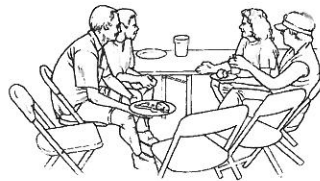
Paul Cook –
Mission & Ministry Board of Directors - President

Church
Archives

BACK IN HISTORY. by Theresa Lund, Historian

From October 2007 St. Paul Lutheran Messenger

Fellowship, December 10, 1953: Members of the newly organized social club of St Paul Lutheran Church selected as its name "Adult Friendship Club". Membership is open to any individual or couple wishing to join in fellowship and fun. Meetings are held in the evening on the first Sunday of the month. Merwin T Greer was president and Mrs. Robert Klein served as Secretary. Following the singing of Christmas carols, games were conducted and refreshments served by the hosts Mr. and Mrs. John Lubbock and Mr. and Mrs. William Petzolds. Others present were Rev and Mrs. E A Wessel, Mrs. Antonia Greer, the Harold Zimmers, William Sharpes, Hubert Noacks, Dwight Pearsons, Leland Miracles and Carl Luebkemanns. Accepted as new members that evening were Mr. and Mrs. Russell Bryson, Mr. and Mrs. William Chapman, and Loran Dockter.



Fellowship Club

FEBRUARY, 1954: The training and work of a deaconess in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, was shown in colored slides at the missionary league meeting of the Women's Guild. Many of the scenes were taken at Valparaiso University in Indiana. A flip chart showing the structure and work of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League was displayed. The Brownie troop sponsored by the Guild invited members to a tea March 9, 2:30PM in the Parish Hall.

APRIL, 1954: Women from St Paul Lutheran Church attended the eleventh annual convention of the LWML, California-Nevada District at Zion Lutheran Church in Terra Bella, California. Convention goers witnessed the ground breaking for the Good Shepherd Home of the West for handicapped children. Rev E A Wessel and his son Edward took part in the ceremony. Delegates voted to give financial aid to three mission stations during the coming year at South San Francisco, Sebastopol and Henderson, Nevada.

EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE: St Paul Lutheran Church sponsored an Easter Sunrise service at the Starlight Drive In Theater. Hwy 99 South at Gerard Avenue. The service began at 5:30AM, Come as You are, stay in your car! The Rev E A Wessell spoke on the subject "I Know That My Redeemer Lives". The church choir sang "The Strife is Over"; "Palestrina" and "Jesus Christ is Risen Today".

ST. PAUL PRESCHOOL HAPPENINGS

by Angelique Faulkner, Preschool Director

November Happenings At The Preschool

It is finally starting to feel like fall! The classrooms will soon come alive with fall art, leaves, turkeys and Indians. Conversations will be had about "What we are thankful for". And music will fill the classrooms as we continue to practice our songs for our Christmas program. It will be a short month filled with great things!

The preschool will be closed on Friday, November 6 as our preschool teachers will be attending a weekend Early Educators Conference with Lisa Murphy. Although we are teachers we should always be learning, just like our students.

I want to say a great big "THANK YOU" to all of our friends last month who helped support St. Jude Children's Research Hospital by gathering donations from friends and family. St. Paul Preschool raised \$980 for St. Jude!!

I am so very thankful for all of our teachers, students and families at St. Paul. We are beyond blessed at our preschool. Have a wonderful Thanksgiving Holiday.

Salvation Army Christmas Shoe Boxes

Please remember the filled boxes are due back on November 22, so there is still plenty of time to fill them. If you would like to bring them back sooner, please bring them to the church office. The boxes go to the Salvation Army for use in Merced. These boxes will then be given to children in our community to help brighten their Christmas. The children that received the boxes last year were thrilled. Thank you and as Carmen says, "God Bless."





HMong Ministries Updates

HMong Language School

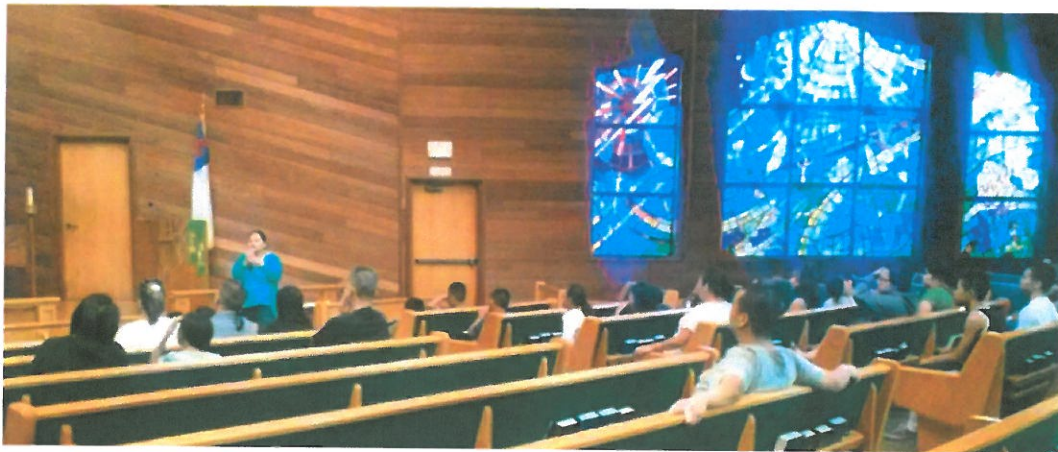
HMong Language School's Family Fun Night was held on Saturday, Oct. 17th for the first time. We had around 60 people who attended including children, youth, and adults. A devotion on who Jesus is and John 3:16 were shared with everyone during devotion time. HMong students sang "Jesus Loves Me" in the HMong Language. They did very good. The majority of these students first heard this song when they first attended HMong School in September.

After devotion and song, we had dinner together in the Parish Hall. Thanks to the parents who volunteered to bring desert and food. God bless their hearts.

The youth and the older children had fun playing volleyball, board games, and ping-pong while the younger children participated in crafts. The adults had the opportunity to fellowship together.

I had a chance to engage in conversations with parents and other family members. Many continue to live life in the dark with no peace and freedom in Lord Jesus. We continue to pray for them that one day they may come to confess Jesus as Lord and be in relationship with God.

A young woman, for the first time, attended our HMong Women Bible study. She learned of our Bible study class when she attended the school family fun night. We thank God for leading her to Bible study and pray that she continues to come back with the help of the Holy Spirit.



HMong School Family Fun Night: Devotion in Sanctuary

Bible Trivia:

Thanks to those who attended the Bible Trivia Event on Sunday, Oct. 18th. Your support is greatly appreciated. Everyone did a great job, including the younger children! I'm really amazed at how well the children and youth know the Bible. These participants enjoyed it and had a great time! If you did not make it this time, we hope you can join us next time.

November 2015 Servants

BIRTHDAYS

- November 5 Janet Seilnacht
- November 11 Timmie Bressler
- November 13 Jax Keller
- November 17 Kristi Martin
- November 20 Syl Braa
- November 20 Sandra Braa
- November 22 Paul Smith
- November 23 Lorry Hutton
- November 25 Russell Pearson
- November 28 Gretchen DeLaCruz
- November 29 Heather Nardello
- November 29 Austin Mello

ANNIVERSARIES

- November 4 Paul & Nicole Cook
- November 24 Greg & Sandy Bishop
- November 27 John & Mary Wallace

BAPTISM BIRTHDAYS

- November 1 Traci Ceska
- November 17 Anya Davidenas
- November 18 Gary Mortensen
- November 20 Marj Hoffmann
- November 23 Scott Chastain
- November 25 Samuel Severson
- November 25 Carter Vannest
- November 27 Kameron Harstad
- November 28 Greg McKenzie
- November 28 Hanna Severson

Also baptized in November:

- Betty Jo Rodgers,
- Nicole Harstad
- Jesse Keller

GREETERS

- November 1 (8:45) Phil & Mary Rahn
- November 8 (8:45) Jerry & Melinda Price
- November 15 (8:45) Marj Hoffmann
- November 22 (8:45) Greg & Sandy Bishop
- November 29 (8:45)

COMMUNION SET UP
Rose Martin & Jean Hetland

COMMUNION SERVERS

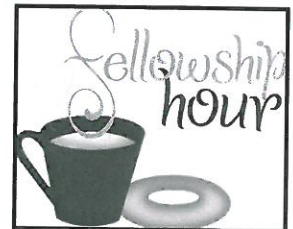
- November 1 (8:45)
- November 1 (10:30) Gary Hogston
- November 15 (8:45)

READERS

- November 1 (8:45) Melinda Price
- November 8 (8:45) Irene Barbour Pearson
- November 15 (8:45) Marj Hoffmann
- November 22 (8:45) Mary Rahn
- November 29 (8:45)

**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 AND ALL OUR CHURCH
FRIENDS.**

NOVEMBER 2015



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 Elders Meeting 6:00 pm Library	3	4	5	6 Preschool & Daycare closed for Early Educators Conference	7 HMong Language School 9 a.m.
8 8:45 am Worship 9:15 am Bible Song (Sunday School) 9:15m HMong Bible Study 10:30 am Worship 6:30 Confirmation	9	10	11 Bible Class 10:30 a.m. Veterans Day No School or Daycare	12	13	14 HMong Language School 9 a.m.
15 8:45 am Worship 9:15 am Bible Song (Sunday School) 9:15m HMong Bible Study 10:30 am Worship 6:30 Confirmation	16 10:00 LWML Library 4-H 6:00 Parish Hall M&M Board Meeting 6:00 pm Library	17	18 Habitat Volunteer Orientation 7 PM OMC	19	20	21 HMong Language School 9 a.m.
22 8:45 am Worship 9:15 am Bible Song (Sunday School) 9:15m HMong Bible Study 10:30 am Worship	23	24	25 Bible Class 10:30 a.m.	26 Thanksgiving day No School, Daycare Office Closed	27	28 HMong Language School 9 a.m.
29 8:45 am Worship 9:15 am Bible Song (Sunday School) 9:15m HMong Bible Study 10:30 am Worship 6:30 Confirmation	30					
<div style="border: 2px solid black; padding: 10px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <p>WORSHIP SERVICES 8:45 a.m. (Traditional) 10:30 a.m. (Contemporary) Communion 1st & 3rd Sundays</p> </div>						

November 2015

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



“Connecting People to Jesus”

**www.stpaul
merced.org**

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ST. PAUL LUTHERAN MINISTRIES

Mission: “Connecting People to Jesus”

MINISTRY STAFF

Interim Pastor
Rev. Mick Ista

HMong Ministries
Vicar Doua Xiong

School Principal
Amy Mello

Pre-School Director
Angelique Faulkner

MISSION & MINISTRY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Paul Cook
Treasurer: Keri Good
Secretary: James Nardello
Marilyn Anderson, Kathy George
Barbara Christensen, Sue Xiong

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

How to reach us:

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Merced CA 95340

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