



ST. PAUL LUTHERAN MESSENGER

January
2016

Volume 17 Issue 1

The folks of St. Paul can look forward to an exciting and event-filled year. This particular time probably brings anticipation and anxiety. You anticipate moving forward with the call process and you're a little anxious about how all of this is going to turn out. Your feelings are well founded and this is why each of us must be daily asking for the Lord's guidance as well as a confident faith in Him to guide us to that pastor who will be most suited to lead this congregation into the future.

While I gave the voters a summary of the process that would be followed as the call committee takes up the next challenge of issuing a call to a pastor, I thought it would be best to repeat that summary in more detail so that everyone knows the process that will be followed in the months ahead.

Since your call committee is in place, they will begin by contacting the circuit visitor, Pastor Dan Deuel, who is a pastor in Stockton. He will then notify the district office that the congregation is ready to place a call and he will be meeting with us. He will be informed that we have chosen to use a consultant. This was the advice of the transition team to the call committee. The consultant, who is a retired pastor and trained in human resources, will help the call committee with interviewing the candidates. The congregation will be asked by the call committee for names of potential candidates. The congregation may submit as many names as they want. The California, Nevada, and Hawaii District office will also submit names of potential candidates to our "call list." The call committee will then prayerfully discern which of the candidates are best suited for the call list. The call committee's list which usually includes about 6 pastors is then submitted to the consultant who has been studying this congregation and the information gathered by the transition team. He will then interview the candidates whose names were submitted. He will discuss his findings with the call committee. Usually the call committee will narrow the choices to two or three candidates. It is at this time that the names of the candidates and the rationale as to why they have been chosen will be brought to the congregation for a vote to issue a call.

Please understand that this is a summary. There are many intermediary steps that take place before a call is placed. Also, please understand that there are times when information is requested regarding potential candidates and that information is held up for one reason or another. We must all be patient during this process and trust that the folks on the call committee are as eager as others in the congregation to call a Senior Pastor for St. Paul Ministries. I too, am eager for you to call a pastor. I hear distant places calling me and our RV to see this beautiful country and I know Tammy wants to be home for more than two days a week for a while.

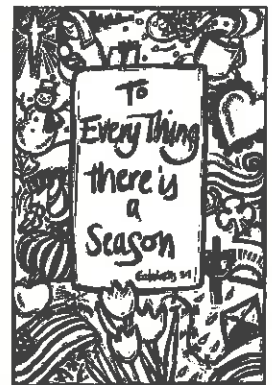
The transition team and I are convinced that enlisting a consultant to help the call committee with their responsibilities will expedite this process and will lead to a suitable pastor for this congregation. Please keep this entire process in your prayers DAILY. The Lord honors our requests and needs and He is faithful.

May the Lord bless your new year!

Pastor Mick

Look What's Inside

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HMong Ministries Updates

Greetings!

Happy 2016, brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus. I hope that all of you had a wonderful Merry Christmas and a Happy New.

As the Lord was about to ascend into heaven, the disciples asked, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" In replied, He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:6-8)

Another Christmas had passed by and the Lord has not yet returned. This probably leads many to wonder if He will ever come again. Brothers and sisters, do not be hopeless. The Lord was clear that He is going to the Father to prepare a place for us. When it is ready, He will come back to take all the believers to be with Him. Whether that His second come is going to happen during the day or night, the Father has it all planned. We need to be ready. While we are waiting, we shall continue to be His witnesses and share His love and saving grace to all nations, starting here, at St. Paul Lutheran-Merced.

The Lord told us to be witnesses starting from where we live. While some of our brothers and sisters are doing the Lord's mission overseas, Joy of Harvest Ministries continues to stand firm in the Lord's mission here in the Central Valley of California. All nations are here among us. Therefore, our cities, states, and country are critically in need of the Gospel and the Lord's grace. We need to continue building a strong foundation of faith right here at home.

The Lord's vision for Joy of Harvest Ministries is not only through sharing the Good News in ours areas but through teaching and learning also. Joy of Harvest Ministries is planning to continue with outreach ministry through visiting our neighbors, friends, and families in the Merced, Stockton, and Sacramento, perhaps, Yuba City and Marysville areas as well. If it is God's will, we are planning to partner with our sister churches in these areas to expand the HMong Language School, a Christocentric teaching and learning. So, please keep Joy of Harvest Ministries and its HMong Language School in your prayers. We will keep you in ours also.

As the Lord's disciples gazed up into heaven while He was ascending, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11)

While we all gaze into heaven for our Lord and Savior's return, let all children of God witness Christ to our community, state, country, and the world. With all of us working together to sow the Lord's seed to our families, relatives, and neighbors, with His help, our church and ministries will blossom maturely.

The Lord bless, keep, and give you his peace this New Year. Amen!

In His Grip,

Vicar Doua Xiong



HMong Ministries Updates

Happy New Year!

I give thanks to God for another successful session of HMong Language School here at St. Paul. I was very thankful for my volunteer teachers. They were very dedicated for the work of the Kingdom. God bless their hearts. The teachers and students are anxiously looking forward to HMong Language School in the spring. One parent said to me, "My daughter cannot wait until HMong School resumes in the Spring."

The idea of the triple B's ministry outreach (Belonging, Becoming, and Believing) that I shared back in October was implemented through HMong School. For October, November, and December, HMong School had one sort of fellowship event: October Fun Night, November Thanksgiving Celebration, and a December HMong Free Day for the last day of school. Also, in December the HMong Christmas Program was held.

It was exciting to hear one parent said, "I'm coming to your Christmas Program with my daughter." Another parent said, "Please, sign up my two sons for your Christmas Program."

It is unusual that HMong parents would allow their children to participate in church activities, when they are not Christians. This, I believe the Holy Spirit has worked through the hearts of these students and their parents. I hope and pray that their participations in the HMong Christmas Program in December, gave them the opportunity to better see the Gospel and the true meaning of Christmas.

Thank you for keeping this project in your prayers, as Vicar Doua and I continue to work with the other HMong leaders in ministry to meaningfully share the Good News through HMong Language School.

Blessings to all and may 2016 be a wonderful year for all of us!

Sue Xiong



Reading HMong Scriptures and Singing HMong Hymns.

Church
Archives**BACK IN HISTORY.** by Theresa Lund, Historian*(Taken from the January 2009 St. Paul Messenger)***25th ANNIVERSARY OF INCORPORATION - DECEMBER 4, 1966****Planning Committee:** Rev. J.M. Proffitt, William Petzold, Ruth Jueneman, William Jueneman & Aletha Schelby.**Morning Service (11AM):** Rev. Oswald A. Waech, Ex Sec. of Stewardship, Southern California District, Preacher.**Vesper Service (4PM)** Dr. Paul E. Jacobs, President Calif-Nev District, Preacher.

Buffet supper following the Vesper service.

Others Serving:**Worship/Usher/Extra Seating:** Gerald Herrington**Music:** Gladys Hammer, Doris Alexander, Elsie Miracle & Aletha Schelby**Flowers:** Bertha Vaughn, **Invitations/Bulletins:** Larry Sorge & Marge Dickson**Food:** Martha Tober, Mary Nutchter, Mildred Moen, Edna Glusing & Rose Heilman**Clean-up:** Men's Club, **Servers:** Walther League**Guest Book:** Lynn Petzold, **Housing:** William Petzold**Parish Hall Decorations:** Ann Fairbairn & Mrs. Kenneth Hayes**Scrap Book:** Theresa Lund, **Photographers:** Hugo Tober & Ron Lund**Publicity:** William Jueneman, **Greetings:** Karl Kranish**CHURCH OFFICERS:** President: William Petzold, VP: William Jueneman, Secretary: Ken Hayes, Treasure: Don Fulton, Worship: Gerald Herrington, Property: William Hiller, Stewardship: Jerry Lutz, Evangelism: Leo Thaut, Education: Larry Powers.**SUNDAY SCHOOL STAFF:** **Superintendent:** Ron Lund, **Secretary:** Dorothy Carr, **Cradle Roll:** Ruth Jueneman, **Nursery:** Mrs. Emil Motzny, Mrs. Jerry Mason & Miss Carol Nutchter, **Kindergarten:** Miss Kaylene Alexander & Christine Stacey, **1st:** Ellie Lutz, **2nd:** Ida Powers, **3rd:** Mrs. James Rinker & Jan Sorge, **4th:** Lucille Hiller & Leo Thaut, **5th:** Miss Nancy Henneke, **6th:** Virginia Proffitt, **7th:** Theresa Lund, **8th:** Gladys Hammer & Martha Tober, **High School:** Emil Motzny, **Adult Bible Class:** Eleanore Martin, **Weekday Bible Class:** Aletha Schelby, **Confirmation & Adult Instruction:** Rev. James Proffitt.**MEN'S CLUB:** President: Ron Lund, VP: Bill Hiller, Secretary: Larry Sorge, Treasure: John Carr.**LADIES AIDE:** President: Helen Kranish, VP: Virginia Proffitt, Secretary: Yvonne Christensen, Treasure: Anita Van Pelt**LWML (formerly Women's Guild):** President: Lona Sancibrian, VP: Ellie Lutz, Secretary: Vicky Larson, Treasurer Theresa Lund**SENIOR WALTHER LEAGUE:** President: Clark Kellogg, VP: Nancy Henneke, Secretary: Christine Stacey/Carol Nutchter, Treasure: Sherry Tompkins**JUNIOR WALTHER LEAGUE:** President: Lee Stacey, VP: Dean Petzold, Secretary: Lynnette Monson, Treasure: Cathleen Herrington**MUSIC DEPARTMENT:** Organist: Doris Alexander, Elsie Miracle, Jan Sorge, Senior Choir: Gladys Hammer Junior Choir: Aletha Schelby



**NEWS AND NOTES FROM
ST. PAUL SCHOOL
January 2015
By Amy Mello, Principal**

December was spent celebrating Advent and preparations for the most important day of the Christian calendar – Jesus' birth! At the school students spent December rehearsing and singing their hearts out to celebrate the true King.

We were able to share the good news with over 400 guests at our annual Christmas Program – "A King is Coming to Town".

In addition to getting ready for our big show, students engaged in stewardship opportunities to bless others. This year, we joined the efforts of Betty Jo Rodgers to fill shoeboxes for the Salvation Army to deliver to needy children in the Merced area. In conjunction, the church and school together filled 143 boxes! Each class brought their boxes to chapel and prayed over them. As 6th grader, Ben Faulkner prayed, "May children who don't know Jesus get to know Him, and may those who know Him, know Him better." Throughout December students continued to bring in chapel offerings to add to what had already been collected. Our goal was to reach \$200. That money was used to join the church in filling Christmas food baskets for needy families in our community. As we usher in 2016 and begin a new year, we look forward to sharing that spirit of generosity throughout our community. That is what St. Paul is all about!

VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION on Wednesday, January 13th from 7-8 p.m. at St. Paul Lutheran Church Outreach Ministry Center, 2916 N. McKee Rd. Merced.

All new volunteers need to attend to learn the history of Habitat both locally and globally plus sign up for upcoming opportunities.

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

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: mercehostel@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 December, Thrivent members have contributed \$3124.58 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

MORGAN'S MUSIC MOMENTS

I want to thank all who have faithfully led the signing at the 8:45 Traditional worship and also provided special music for the offering time.

Thank You: Irene Pearson, Mary Rahn, Mary Homann, Carol Sipan and Carole Legan

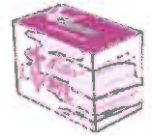
This is such a blessing for me as Music Director/Organist to have this support. (and guidance in some cases when I lose track of the verses in the hymn, etc..)

GOD BLESS YOU for your commitment to serve.
Deanna

Heartline Prayer Request Tip

Thank you to all the prayer warriors who take part in receiving the Heartline Prayer requests. Please note, the Heartline email account is used only for sending out Heartline prayer requests, as well as an occasional announcement. This email account is not monitored on a regular basis, so anything sent to that account will not be handled in a timely manner. That is why it is important not to reply to that account and any emailed Heartline prayer requests should be sent to churchoffice@stpaulmerced.com.

If you would like to be added to the Heartline email list, please contact the church office and give us your name and email address.



LUTHERAN WOMEN IN MISSION

(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, January 25, 2016.** Devotions "Radiance from God" and the Quarterly Bible Study Topic "Sanctuary" 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. Every woman is welcome to join us and get to know your sisters in Christ.

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



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

CHILDREN'S**OUTREACH****MINISTRIES****IS GOD CALLING YOU?**

I am facing surgery for my foot so need to be off my feet.

Therefore, I ask you to seriously consider helping at one of our middle schools ONE day a week for an hour. My helpers would continue if they had another person to help them.

This opportunity would begin after the Christmas holidays which would start the week of January 4th.

Monday - Cruickshank

Tuesday - Rivera

Thursday - Hoover

Friday - Tenaya

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

BIBLE CLASSES AND SUNDAY SCHOOL



HMong Bible Classes
10:15 a.m.

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

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

Meet in the Parish Hall and walk over to the classroom in the OMC.

Bible Class
Wednesday 10:30 a.m.
Church Library

Both classes meet on Sunday in the library.

PRESIDENT'S NEWS

Dear St. Paul Congregation Members, Families and Friends:

What a wonderful time of year December was as we celebrated the birth of our Lord and Savior. As the angel said to the shepherds in Luke 2:11, "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord." As we celebrated the Christmas season, we were reminded of the need to be grateful for the many blessing and gifts given to us, especially the greatest gift of all – Jesus Christ

St. Paul Lutheran Ministries has been given many gifts. One is you, the members and congregation at St. Paul. Other gifts are:

Pastor Ista, our interim pastor

Vicar Doua, HMong Ministry

Transition Study Team – I am thankful for all their hard work and a job well done.

Mission & Ministry Board of Directors and Elders

On November 22nd, the Transition Study Team presented to you their strategic plan for the Ministry and detailed the qualifications and skills we, the congregation, are seeking in our next senior pastor. You approved that plan on December 6th. Thank you.

On December 6th, you approved the appointed Senior Pastor Call Task Force. Those members are: Scott Chastain, Kent Christensen, James Nardello, Vicar Doua, Amy Mello, Carolyn Daberkow, Bethany Bogle, Sandy Braa and Paul Cook. The Call Task Force looks to start the search process in January and will keep you updated. Please continue to pray for St. Paul Lutheran Ministries as we go through this search. We have to trust and have faith that God is sending us the right pastor for St. Paul.

God Bless you and your family and we look forward to a wonderful 2016.

In Christ,

Paul Cook – Mission & Ministry Board of Directors - President

ST. PAUL PRESCHOOL HAPPENINGS

by Angelique Faulkner, Preschool Director

Preschool Happenings:

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas break. But now, we are ready to get back to work. The kids have been working so diligently this year and have learned so much. I enjoy visiting each class and observing the changes in each child. It is truly amazing. In the month of January we will continue to focus on our curriculum and building upon our skills. At the end of the month we will be celebrating Lutheran Schools Week. During this week we will have dress up days and lots of fun!

May God greatly bless you and your family in the new year!!

Ms. Angelique

Salvation Army Christmas Shoe Boxes

“You all did good”. Thank you so much for filling the shoeboxes for the Salvation Army. St. Paul Lutheran Church and St. Paul Lutheran school combined to return a grand total of 143 boxes. YES, that is a correct number—143 boxes. It just shows what working together can accomplish! Thank you to Thrivent for providing the shoeboxes.

Allen and Sandra Kratzer from the Salvation Army came on December 13 to help bless and accept the boxes. Plans were made for Amy Mello, principal of St. Paul School, to take some of her students to help distribute the boxes at the Salvation Army. And as Carmen says, “God Bless You All”!



A VOTERS MEETING will be held Sunday, January 10, at 1:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. This meeting is to elect new board members and elders. Also, per the bylaws, a report on the state of the church will be given. All Communicant Members, who are at least 18 years of age, AND have read the Constitution and Bylaws and have signed a form, are eligible to vote. If you would like to become a voting member, please stop by the church office for copies of the Constitution and Bylaws. After you have read them, return to the church office to sign the form. **Plan now to attend this important meeting.**

BIRTHDAYS

- Jan. 2 Jesse Keller
- Jan. 5 Sonja Peters
- Jan. 11 Delaney Lundin
- Jan. 17 Kristen Randall
- Jan. 21 Jan Sorge
Danielle Blaylock
- Jan 25 Cody Harstad
- Jan. 28 Chopper Mello
- Jan. 29 Jeff George
- Jan. 30 Gary Hogston

BAPTISM BIRTHDAYS

- Jan. 1 Darlene Mentz
Kent Christensen
- Jan. 5 Matt Sebastian
- Jan. 12 John Wallace
- Jan. 23 Max Ceska
- Jan. 24 Brady Mello
- Jan. 30 Tammie Meyer
- Jan. 31 Chopper Mello



January 2016 Servants

GREETERS

- January 3 (8:45) Marj Hoffmann
- January 10 (8:45) Irene Broughton
- January 17 (8:45) Lonn Boyer
- January 24 (8:45) Karen Kelleher
- January 31 (8:45) Greg & Sandy Bishop

COMMUNION SET UP
Herschel & Marion West

COMMUNION SERVERS

- January 3 (8:45)
- January 3 (10:30)
- January 17 (8:45)
- January 17 (10:30)

READERS

- January 3 (8:45) Marj Hoffmann
- January 10 (8:45)
- January 17 (8:45) Marj Hoffmann
- January 24 (8:45)
- January 31 (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.**

January

2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 8:45 am Worship 9:15 am Bible Song (Sunday School) 10:15m HMong Bible Study 10:30 am Worship 6:30 Confirmation	4 6:00 p.m. Elders Meeting Library	5	6 Bible Class 10:30 a.m.	7	8	9
10 9:15 am Bible Song (Sunday School) 9:15m HMong Bible Study 1:00Voters Meeting 6:30 Confirmation	11	12	13 Bible Class 10:30 a.m.	14	15	16
17 8:45 am Worship 9:15 am Bible Song (Sunday School) Bible Study 10:30 am Worship 6:30 Confirmation	18 6:00 p.m. M & M Board Library 6:30Habitat OMC	19	20 Bible Class 10:30 a.m.	21	22 6:00 Wedding Rehearsal	23 2:00 p.m. Sterner-Snyder Wedding
24 8:45 am Worship 9:15 am Bible Song (Sunday School) 10:30 am Worship 6:30 Confirmation	25	26	27 Bible Class 10:30 a.m.	28	29	30
31 8:45 am Worship 9:15 am Bible Song (Sunday School) 10:30 am Worship 6:30 Confirmation			<div style="border: 2px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> WORSHIP SERVICES 8:45 a.m. (Traditional) 10:30 a.m. (Contemporary) Communion 1st & 3rd Sundays 11:45 a.m. HMong Worship Service </div>			

January 2016

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



“Connecting People to Jesus”

**www.stpaul
merced.org**

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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

James & Heather Nardello
Bible Song Leaders

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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