

Epistle of St. Paul November 2016

Sisters and brothers in Christ Jesus,

November is the month that begins with All Saints Day. On November 6 we will remember those who have died since Nov. 1, 2015 and also honor any veterans from our congregation, so please let Colleen or me know so we include you with our prayers of thanksgiving on Nov. 6. November 13 will include our annual congregational meeting immediately after worship to pass a budget and elect council members for next year. On November 20th we will have a pulpit exchange, I will preach at St. Peter's Evans City and Pastor Brandon Johns will preach at St. Paul. Thanksgiving Day is a national holiday and also a time the church returns thanks to our Creator for all the blessings showered upon us. Somehow, Zelienople Lutherans have not had a Thanksgiving service for the past several years. This year our confirmation students are planning a special worship service for Sunday NIGHT 7 p.m. Nov. 20th at Passavant Center's Seaman Chapel. We hope you and your families and friends can join us for this special service. Passavant, Zion and English congregations will also help plan and lead this worship. Advent begins on November 27th, so we will have a very ministry filled month at St. Paul. Give thanks to the diligence of the Altar Committee!

On All Saints Sunday, as we are bereft of loved ones, and continue to adjust our lives to the void we experience by their deaths, we remember that God is with us as we adjust to life without those who have passed. We realize that those who have gone before us are with our Risen Lord. They are the saints who have already departed.

When young people are preparing to receive the Holy Supper, we kneel before the altar and I explain that we receive the bread and wine on this side of the altar and the saints who have gone before us are also receiving the Holy Supper on the other side of the altar, heaven. Yes, we miss those who are no longer with us, but we live with the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ. We look forward to worship on November 6th as we remember the saints whom we have commended to God this past year. We continue to live knowing that in the light of the Communion of Saints and Holy Communion we continue to be united with all saints both living and departed. While some worship the Risen Christ face to face, we worship the Same Risen Christ under the veil of bread and wine at the Altar. We are linked with Heaven, with the Communion of Saints, with our loved ones in the sacrament of Holy Communion.

Our young people are collecting money to purchase gifts to send to children overseas so please be generous as our youth become aware of the needs of other children throughout the world. What a wonderful way to return thanks for all that the Lord has done for us!

On November 20th, during our pulpit exchange, we will celebrate Thank Offering Sunday and ask everyone to bring non-perishable food items to share with those less fortunate than ourselves so they also may celebrate Thanksgiving Day with a feast.

Finally, we will be decorating the sanctuary for Advent. See future church bulletins for the exact time [and where breakfast happens before the decorating].

May the Good Lord continue to bless us with abundance to share with other people.

Shalom,
Pastor Bev



