

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we celebrate the 12 days of Christmas in anticipation of the Epiphany celebration, we can take pause to reflect on our faith practices. During confirmation class, we intentionally have our students engage in faith practices. Not only do we require that the students regularly attend **worship**, we ask them to actively lead worship. We are engaged in **bible study** as we explore the creeds, the Ten Commandments and The Lord's Prayer. **Prayer** is always part of our class. We work on **encouraging** one another, **giving** of our time and skills (and often discovering skills and developing those skills). Finally we are engaged in inviting others to participate with us in our Christian vocation.

As the new year is upon us, I encourage each of you to deliberately and daily engage in a faith practice. From year to year I engage in a variety of bible studies. This year I am again going to read the psalms. Usually I tackle one a day, until I get to Psalm 119 which is 176 verses, Sometimes I spend a few days reflecting on a psalm. I can easily spend a week reflecting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> psalm. I learn things about myself, my prayer life and the Christian community as I read and reflect on the psalms.

This is the year of Luke, so almost all gospel texts during our worship will be from Luke's gospel. This year our synod is offering a year long study of the Gospel according to Luke. Basically each week, half a chapter is studied. We are a little late in getting started because I am not on Facebook, so didn't have this available in December. However, we have copies of the study through February 9<sup>th</sup> available for you. Many discussion questions for youth and adults are included for your guidance. I would suggest doing a chapter a week until we catch up with the proposed schedule.

Of course we continue to offer daily devotional booklets which many of you have engaged with as part of your faith practice throughout the years. This is another option for Bible study.

Bible study is one of the faith practices. We all need to practice all of the components and I know that some are easier for us than others. Together we are a congregation engaged in the faith practices that help us become faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Pastor's Purse. Your generosity was greatly appreciated.

I continue to learn daily as I engage in faith practices and hope you will join St. Paul as we deliberately become more involved in our faith for the sake of the world and our own spiritual growth.

*May the Joy of Christ be with you in 2019.  
May God's Healing Presence sustain you.  
May the Holy Spirit increase your Spiritual  
Strength to serve each other and the world.  
Amen*

**SHARING  
BRINGS JOY**  
TO US. TO OTHERS. TO GOD.

Shalom,

Pastor Bev +



Only new prayer requests will be in the weekly bulletins.

**CONTINUED PRAYER REQUESTS:** Shonna Ash, Sally Benjamin, Brad Bartley, Ann Boben, Landon Brewer, Tom Brosenitsch, Carol Bulger, Nancy Bulger, Samantha Bulger, Nellie Chmara, Kim Christy, Cynthia sister of Bev Brosenitsch, Pete Carlino,

Rick Dickerson, Don, Emma [child suffering from viral meningitis], David English, Mark Fox, Bernie Fedorka, Barbara Frantz, Charlotte Glaspey, Brett Greenhill, Adrienne Haegg, Judy Hart, William Loveridge, Bobbie Marchlenski, Martin Matscherz, Nolan Nachriener, Newborn Conrad, Don Nielsen, Terry Oakes, Verna Patscko, Sherry Pengidore family on death of her son, Lois Peebles, Mike Pollack, Jax Ramirez, Erin Roman, Bud Senn, Dawn Swidorsky, Louise Spithaler, John Wherry, Lilly Wolfe, and Ron Zinkham.

**Please keep the church updated on your prayer request. All updates and request may be emailed to [spicofzelie@gmail.com](mailto:spicofzelie@gmail.com) Also if you would like to be notified of any needed prayers, please email the church office, with your email address.**

## A prayer for new beginnings

In his book *Awed to Heaven, Rooted in Earth* (Fortress Press), Walter Brueggemann writes in an Epiphany poem:

... this is a time to be born.  
So we turn to you, God of our life  
God of all our years,  
God of our beginning....  
We dare pray that you will do for us  
and among us and through us  
what is needful for our newness.  
Give us the power to be receptive,  
to take the newness you give ....  
There is a time to be born, and it is now.  
We sense the pangs and groans of your newness.  
Come here now in the name of Jesus. Amen.

How fitting that the Epiphany season and the new year coincide! Epiphany reveals a new King, the beginning of his ministry, his new disciples, his first healings, his “new teaching — with authority” (Mark 1:27). We, too, experience newness, now and year-round. But newness can be tough. So we trust that God, who “[makes] all things new” while banishing “mourning and crying and pain” (Revelation 21:4-5), walks with us in this new year — and always.

## Lessons in wise faith

“The Magi teach us true faith,” said Martin Luther. Given the obstacles they encountered, we would understand if they had given up altogether!

First, the travelers were “off the mark,” coming to Jerusalem to seek a newborn king in a “royal palace.” Then, directed to Bethlehem, the wise men found a sight “so utterly out of keeping with a king” — a poor young woman and child, in a “poor hut” — that one might expect them to head straight home. “But,” declares Luther, “with a great, strong and full faith they ... follow the word of the prophet and the witness of the star in all purity of heart,” bowing to worship and honor the Savior.

—Based on Luther’s sermon for the Festival of the Epiphany (1522), *Luther’s Works*

“Learn to light a candle in the darkest moments of someone’s life. Be the light that helps others see.”  
—Roy T. Bennett

Dear Members of St. Paul:

My wishes go out to everyone for a Healthy and Blessed New Year. Hopefully all of you had a wonderful Holiday Season and enjoyed time with family and friends.

As we begin a new year I hope St. Paul is able to see changes for 2019. First would be our approval with Zion Lutheran Church to form a mutual ministry agreement with the hope of finding a minister to work with both congregations. We have worked with them to draw up an agreement to form this mutual ministry. Hopefully it will have the synod's approval and be able to be voted on at both congregational meetings the end of the month. **Our meeting is currently scheduled for January 27<sup>th</sup> after our church service.** Please plan to attend this important meeting.

### MEALS ON WHEELS

This is our month to provide desserts for Meals on Wheels. Our weeks are January 21<sup>st</sup> and January 28<sup>th</sup>. Please see Cheryl Whitehouse if you are able to provide desserts during this period. We will need 30 regular and 12 diabetic each day. Desserts are to be delivered to English Lutheran from 7:00 AM to 9:00 AM.

### SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

We are currently looking for someone to volunteer as our Sunday School Superintendent. Working with our young people is a wonderful opportunity. We would like to thank Elizabeth Muthler for her years of service in this position. She always did a great job with the children and I know they will miss her.

Again, have a great year and looking forward to seeing everyone at church in 2019.

Linda

Information for the Annual Report is due in the office by Wednesday, January 16.

### WILLING WORKERS

What a great year our Congregation and the Willing Workers had...It has so much to do with all of you.

When we ask for desserts for Meals on Wheels, soup, pies, dinner supplies, cookie supplies (Sydney did a great job organizing everything and starting the Walk back up), items for Horse Trading Days, etc. you were there to bring it in. You worked in the parking lot, decorated the church and so many other things, I can't write them all down.

You are very special. You may not come to our Willing Workers meetings or attend church every Sunday, but we know you will be there when we ask. THANK YOU!!

Our next Willing Worker activity will be February 28<sup>th</sup>. It will be a Soup and Sandwich night. More information in the next newsletter.

Again, thank you for being so special. We hope all of you have a very special 2019.

Marty for the Willing Workers.

### ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Did you make a New Year's Resolution to strengthen your faith? Consider trying our Adult Sunday School class. We will start the new year studying Baptism on January 6 and on January 13 we will be Meeting Jesus. Class meets immediately after worship in Strobel Hall. Hope to see you there!

Remember also about our Adult Bible Study on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays each month at 7:00 PM. The Bible Study is led by Pastor Ralph Kusserow.

**Thank you to the following:** Bobi-Jean Alexander for the wonderful Festival of Music she organized with the help of Pastor Brewer and a special thank you to our talented youth and choir members who provided music for the Festival along with various other groups.

Sydney McMurray and to everyone who brought in cookies for the Cookie Walk.

To our youth for leading us in worship on Sunday, December 16 with wonderful music and reading of the lessons and prayers. Plus being ushers and greeters.

2019

JANUARY



ASSISTING MINISTER: Marty Goetz  
 LECTOR: Marcy Miller  
 GREETERS: Gailyn and Mark Matscherz  
 USHERS: Thom and Colleen Cipro  
 BELLRINGER:  
 Office Hours: Mon., Wed., Fri. from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

SUNDAY

OFFICE OF THE

OFFICE OF THE

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
05	01	02	03	04	05	06
8:30 Choir 9:00 Worship with Holy Communion 10:00 Sunday School 11:00 Confirmation 			7:00 Adult Bible Study			
06	07	08	09	10	11	12
8:30 Choir 9:00 Worship with Holy Communion 10:00 Sunday School	12:30 Willing Workers 7:00 Council Meeting		7:00 Call Committee Meeting in Strobel Hall			
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
8:30 Choir 9:00 Worship with Holy Communion 10:00 Sunday School			10:00 Annual Report info due in office 7:00 Adult Bible Study			
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
8:30 Choir 9:00 Worship 10:00 Sunday School	10:00 February Newsletter info due in office					
	Provide desserts for Meals-On-Wheels. Please see Cheryl Whitehouse with any questions or to sign up for a day.					
27	28	29	30	31		
8:30 Choir 9:00 Worship with Holy Communion 10:00 Congregational Meeting with Lunch following			7:00 Adult Bible Study			
	Provide desserts for Meals-On-Wheels. Please see Cheryl Whitehouse with any questions or to sign up for a day.					