

**Address:**

605 S. Center St.  
Bremen, IN 46506

**Telephone:**

Church:  
1-574-546-2332  
School:  
1-574-546-2790  
Preschool:  
1-574-546-2848

**Fax:**

1-574-546-3242

**E-Mail:**

church@stpaulsbremen.org

**Website:**

stpaulsbremen.org  
facebook.com/stpaulsbremen

**Church Office Hours:**

M,W,Th, F 8:30 – 11:30 am

**Sunday Schedule:**

Worship: 8 & 10:30 am  
Sunday School & Adult  
Bible Class: 9:15 am  
Unity Sunday: 9:30 am with  
Sunday School following

**Pastors:**

Rev. Roger Rohde  
Office Hours:  
M & Th 8:30 – 11:30  
1-574-209-0306 (H)

Rev. Neil Wonnacott  
Office Hours:  
W & F 8:30 – 11:30  
1-574-301-9291 (H)

On November 13<sup>th</sup> we joined in our synod's celebration leading up to the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation on October 31, 2017 by recalling Martin Luther's birth and how God used him to be a spiritual leader. Martin Luther blessed many people by pointing them to the Biblical truth of salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. The verse for this celebration was from Hebrews 13: 7 "Remember your leaders, who spoke the Word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith."

Thinking of this topic of spiritual leadership as we come to the celebration of Christ's birth, I cannot help but think of the Virgin Mary. She surely was a spiritual leader. We are not to worship her any more than we are to worship Martin Luther. Yet, we are to imitate their faith.

When we reflect upon the Virgin Mary, we come upon a spiritual leader who was not very vocal or forceful. Instead her spiritual leadership displayed itself in the very quiet way she submitted to the Lord and to doing His bidding.

The Virgin May has only a few words of hers recorded in Scripture. Most of them are associated with God calling her to be the bearer of the Christ Child. When the angel Gabriel told her she was to give birth to the Promised Messiah, she very legitimately asked: "How will this be since I am a virgin?" The angel answered: "Nothing is impossible with God." Mary responded to God's Word by saying: "I am the Lord's servant. May it be to me as you have said."

These words of humble servanthood made the Virgin Mary a great spiritual leader whose faith and life we should imitate. Her submission to God's calling meant that she would be rejected, momentarily by her fiancée and for quite some time by other people. She would be looked at as an immoral woman. Yet, her concern was not on how the world would judge here, but on how God called her to be of service to Him and to the world.

The role of spiritual leadership is something God gives to all of us whether we are a pastor or teacher, congregational officer or congregational member. Spiritual leadership is a calling God has given to each of us. Blessed by His grace, we are to use His grace in our lives to bring others to know and trust in Jesus as the Promised Messiah and Savior of the world.

Make this Christmas a blessed and meaningful one by showing spiritual leadership in your relationship with others that they may behold the grace and glory of the Babe in Bethlehem.

## Lessons in Stewardship: Loved to Love: Served to Serve

We read in Romans 12:1-2, “Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.

In these words Paul tells us that the Christian life is one of sacrifice. We dedicate our lives to Christ because we are moved by the love He has shown us. He came into this world and sacrificed His life on the cross so that we may have the forgiveness of sins and everlasting life in heaven. He has shown us mercy and compassion.

Paul goes on from these two verses to speak of the different gifts and talents God gives to His people in the local congregation. He does this so that we can love, serve, and build one another up in the Christian faith.

As we have begun of new church year on November 27<sup>th</sup>, let us consider how Jesus has invested Himself in us and how we may now invest ourselves for Him and one another.



**THE DEADLINE FOR THE JANUARY EPISTLE IS DECEMBER 20TH!!!** Epistle articles, comments, ideas may be deposited in the epistle box in the Narthex mail slots or better yet e-mailed to Deb Burcham at [dburcham@stpaulsbremen.org](mailto:dburcham@stpaulsbremen.org). I appreciate all of your articles, ideas and comments!

## Congregational Christmas Caroling December 4<sup>th</sup> at 4 pm

You are invited to come and make a joyful noise unto the Lord and to the shut-ins of our church and community!

We will meet in the Bethany room at 4 pm to break up into groups and then go out and sing. Also, at 6:30 pm we will return to the church for dinner and fellowship. Please bring a dessert to share at the meal.

Children must be accompanied by an adult.



## **Advent and Christmas Services 2016**

**Midweek Advent Meal and Service - November 30<sup>th</sup>**. This meal is sponsored by the Public Relations and Evangelism boards. On the menu are two kinds of Italian casseroles served with salad, garlic bread and cookies. This is a Thrivent sponsored meal, so no free-will offering will be gathered. Parish fellowship will be supplying the drinks and dinnerware. Let us come together and feast on good food and the Word of God, with our focus on “Your King Is Coming!” based on Matthew 21:1-11. Bring a friend and show them Jesus, our Best Friend!

**Midweek Advent Meal and Service – December 7<sup>th</sup>**. This meal is sponsored by the Parish Fellowship board. On the menu is chicken legs and breasts, our famous mashed potatoes, Italian salad, rolls and cookies. This is a Thrivent sponsored meal, so no free-will offering will be gathered. Parish Fellowship will be supplying the drinks and dinnerware. Let us come to together and feast on good food and the Word of God, with our focus on “The Coming One?” **based on** Matthew 11:2–15. Bring a friend and show them Jesus, our Best Friend!

**December 14<sup>th</sup>** is our Children’s Christmas Service at 7pm. The theme for this service is “To Us a Child Is Born”. PTL will be serving refreshments after the service. Come, see and hear the faith of our children in the day school, preschool and church!

**December 21<sup>st</sup>** is our Advent Service of Praise at 7pm. Now let us put away everyday things and join with one another in a time of praise as we prepare for the coming celebration of the Nativity of Jesus. Come as we conclude the Advent Season, remembering and rejoicing in the three-fold “comings” of Christ. We have no dinner this evening.

**Christmas Eve- Saturday, December 24<sup>th</sup> at 7pm**  
**Christmas Day- Sunday, December 25<sup>th</sup> at 9am**

**The following students at St. Paul’s Lutheran School have earned Honor Roll status for the First Quarter of the 2016-2017 school year:**

Eighth Grade: Brody Beasley, Jacob Cross, Jacob Raasch

Seventh Grade: Ty Feldman, Ellia Foster, Aidan Russell

Sixth Grade: Ian Raasch

Fifth Grade: Lexi Cannon, Thomas Harman, Kia Podlin, Avery Wildauer

Fourth Grade: Wyatt Beasley, Lindie Feldman, Kila Foster, Tyler Raasch, Ian Russell, Noah Wildauer

**The following students have had perfect attendance for the First Quarter of the 2016-2017 school year:**

Kindergarten: Brantley Thornton

Second Grade: Molly Harman

Third Grade: Grace Barts, Cody Bryan, Hunter Cannon, Zeke Feldman, Jack Wildauer

Fourth Grade: Wyatt Beasley, Dominic Clark, Lindie Feldman, Ian Russell, Noah Wildauer

Sixth Grade: Connor Barts, Aaron Miller, Ian Raasch, Alex Trigg

Seventh Grade: Aidan Russell

Eighth Grade: Jacob Cross, Jonah Cross

**Board Briefs:**

**Christian Education:**

Sunday School Mission of the Month – Bethesda Lutheran Home - \$75

**Church Office:**

Membership Changes  
Baptism: Dylan Marie

**Youth:**

**Junior High Youth Night**

- Friday, December 2nd, 7-9 PM in the Gym

Christmas Eve Service - The students in 6th through 8th grades are invited to take part in re-enacting the Nativity Scene on Saturday, December 24th at 7pm. We will be starting our practices on Sunday, December 4th, after 2nd service. Practices will likely be an hour long. Practice dates are as follows: December 4th, 11th, and 18th. We will add additional practices, if needed. If there are any questions contact Kyle Rettinger, either by email: [kbrettinger@hotmail.com](mailto:kbrettinger@hotmail.com) or phone: (574) 780-5570.

2016 PPC meetings: December 19

2017 Voters' Assembly meetings: January 23, April 24, June 5, August 28, November 27

2017 Parish Planning Council: February Retreat (no date set yet), March 27, May 22, July 24, October 23

**Altar Guild: December attendant is Dorothy .**

Altar Flowers in December:

4  
11     Enders/Wonnacott  
18  
25

The Altar Flower Chart for the 2016 Liturgical Year is hanging in the Narthex (North side), just outside the altar guild room door. Please look it over and sign up for flowers.



# SCHOOL NEWS AND NOTES

School Office phone: 546-2790

Fax: 546-3242

e-mail: [schools@stpaulsbremen.org](mailto:schools@stpaulsbremen.org)

December 2016

Our theme for the 2016-2017 school year is Upon this Rock. This is based on Is. 26:4 (ESV): "Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord God is an everlasting rock" We give thanks to God for His gracious care for us all!

Join us in encouraging our school BASKETBALL teams. This month we have three home games. We play on Dec. 1, Dec. 6, and Dec. 12. The times are listed on the Epistle Calendar along with the away games.

As It is approaching the time for the CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION, please continue to pray for our students and their families. We seek to keep the true meaning of this season in the eyes (and hearts) for our students and their families. We need your prayers and assistance.

The Children's Christmas Service for Dec. 14 is entitled, TO US A CHILD IS BORN.

The School Chapel offerings for November and December to go help support Rev. Micah Wildauer in his ministry in Togo.

School News cont.

**VOLUNTEER FOR THIS COMING YEAR!** We welcome all helpers, even one-time helpers. We can use your assistance with a variety of tasks. If you would like to help please contact the school office.

**PTL:** Please save ALUMINUM CANS. These cans may be deposited in the shed on the south end of the parking lot. If you have other aluminum items to donate, call the school office at 546-2790. Also please save the small logo printed on the labels or the lids/caps of CAMPBELL LABELS items. Thank you.

THE TUITION AID FUND seeks your contributions to help those who desire a Christian Education for their children but who need a little help to meet the costs. Your generosity will greatly benefit the cause of Christian Education for both members and non-members. We are also seeking donors who would like to SPONSOR a child or family directly. Please contact Mr. Russell.

NOTE: Contact the church or school office if you have questions concerning scheduling the use of any of the facilities.

**\*\*\*Please check the Church Calendar for other school events.**

## ***BIBLE STUDY OPPORTUNITY!!***

The Ladies Encouragement Group (LEG) Bible Study meet the 1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays of the month at 7 p.m. in the Jerusalem Room at church. All ladies are encouraged to attend! December 4th we will meet in the church parking lot at 4 pm to go caroling at Millers Merry Mannor in Wakarusa and Bible study will be at 7 pm back at church. December 18th at 7 pm will be the LEG Christmas Party with ornament exchange at Joanna Fox's home. Please join us!



Ladies Encouragement Group  
Moving our feet, shining our light!

*Thursday Morning Ladies Bible Class meets from 9:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M. in the Jerusalem Room. All ladies are welcome!*

## ***WE HAVE A JOB FOR MEN***

If you are a male of high school age or older, St. Paul's has a "job" for you. It is not an easy task, but it's one that every man has been given to carry out....to study God's word, obey His commandments and live a life that is pleasing to Him....a job we can never retire from.

The Men's Breakfast Bible Study meets every other week on Wednesday morning from 6:30AM to 7:30 AM and through fellowship and Bible study we help each other in our "jobs" that God has given us. The food and fellowship often create laughter that we all enjoy. Please come and learn with the rest of us. Our schedule for 2016 is as follows:

### **December 14, 28**

We meet in the cafeteria conference room in the Bremen Hospital. Come in the main entrance, walk straight ahead to the waiting area, then turn left...the cafeteria and conference room are on your left.

## **December Devotion: "A Room in Our Father's House"**

*(Jesus said) "In My Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to Myself, that where I am you may be also." John 14:2-3*

"Why don't Western parents love their children?" an elderly Thai woman once asked me. "Western parents do love their children," I replied. "No, I don't think so," she said. "What gives you that idea?" I asked her. "If they loved their children," she said thoughtfully, "then why do parents kick them out of the house when they turn 18 and force them

to find their own place to live?"

When I tried to explain how Western parents and their children value independence and how it's a mark of good parenting when children can live on their own and take care of themselves, the elderly Thai lady just stared at me with a look of incomprehension on her face. I decided it wouldn't be wise for me to mention how older Western people work very hard to maintain their independence as long as they possibly can.

Thai society is very communal. For most Thai people to be alone is to be lonely. They have great joy in being around a group of friends and family as much as possible. In Thai culture everyone fully expects children to live with their parents until they get married. Even when the children get married, they often live with the woman's parents until after the first grandchild is born.

Most homes in Thailand contain extended, multi-generational families. Parents love keeping their families together by having their adult children live with them. The adult children enjoy the familiarity and comfort of continuing to live within the family circle. Everyone in the family is happy to have grandparents living under the same roof with them so they can help take care of them in their old age. This is seen as the best way to show respect and appreciation for all they have done for the family for so many years.

Like those Thai children, we, too, have an invitation to live in our Father's house.

Through faith in Jesus we have a room waiting for us, and that room is ours through all eternity. Because of His great love for us, God opens the doors of His heavenly home and welcomes us in.

Our place in heaven is already prepared. Jesus has arranged our room for us. Our brothers and sisters in Christ who have gone before us are waiting to greet us. We can have confidence that our place in heaven is secured by the blood of Jesus.

**THE PRAYER:** Thank You, Jesus, for preparing a place for us in our Father's house. Through Your suffering, death and resurrection, You have made it possible for us to live in the presence of our Heavenly Father throughout eternity. We are forever grateful. In Your Name. Amen.