

**Address:**

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Bremen, IN 46506

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**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)

This year Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday are observed on the same day. Valentine's Day is a time when we express our love to special people in our lives. This day is symbolized with hearts. Ash Wednesday is the day that begins the penitential season of Lent. It is symbolized with ashes, recalling our frail existence that from dust we came and to dust we shall return (Genesis 3:19; Ecclesiastes 3:20).

Could there be any more appropriate time for each one of us to exam our hearts in relationship to Jesus Christ? Whether we are active in the church, people who know the answers but aren't involved, or people who live our lives apart from God, there is value in searching our hearts with regard to our relationship with Jesus Christ.

Some of you may recall the name of Hank Gathers. He was a senior college basketball player for Loyola Marymount University. He was not just another basketball player, but he was very gifted. He was six feet, seven inches tall. He weighed 210 pounds. In 1990, he was only the second player in NCAA Division 1 basketball history to lead the nation both in scoring (32.7 points a game) and in rebounding (13.7 rebounds a game). He was headed to being a top pick in the upcoming professional basketball league draft. On March 4, 1990, he took an alley-oop pass and dunked it. Running back on defense, he collapsed at center court and died.

That's how life is. One minute we can be active and healthy, and the next minute our life on earth is over. The Lord has told us: "What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes" (James 4:14).

The Lord, therefore, tells us: "Put your house in order, because you are going to die" (II Kings 20:1). "You must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect Him" (Matthew 24:44).

Death is not a distant matter we will face sometime in life. It can be an imminent encounter as the story of Hank Gathers shows us. Our death can be as close as our last breath. How is your heart in relationship to the Lord? Do you "love the Lord your God with **all your heart** and with all your soul and with all your mind (Matthew 22:37)?

This Lenten season is a time to get serious about the spiritual condition of our hearts. "Don't be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life" (Galatians 6:7-8).

Let us make this spiritual heart examination month. Let us each seriously heed the Spirit-driven advice of the Apostle Paul: "Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves" (II Corinthians 13:5).

## **Lessons in Stewardship: What You Have, Is It Faith in Christ?**

Following the previous article, we would like to briefly examine the nature of true faith in Christ.

Many people who profess to be Christians spend a lot of time stating why they don't have to go to church, attend the Lord's Supper, or be an active part of the body of Christ. Their explanation is often based upon such verses as the following: "For by grace you have been **saved through faith**, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, **not of works**, lest anyone should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Truly verses such as this indicate that faith in Christ, not our works, is what saves us. Yet, to deduce from verses such as this that works are insignificant to Christian life is to deny such verses as the following: "Faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead" (James 2:17, 26). The point is that if faith in Christ exists, works are always evident.

What this all means in examining our hearts spiritually is to see whether the faith we say we have is really displaying itself in the way we live our lives. Our forefathers of Lutheranism noted: "Faith in Christ is not an idle thought, but frees us from death and leads us to a life of service to Christ. Works that please God ought to become more and more prevalent in the lives of those whose hearts have been changed by Him. Faith is a vital, deliberate trust in God's grace, so that a person would die a thousand times for it."



**THE DEADLINE FOR THE MARCH EPISTLE IS FEBRUARY 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!

## **THANK YOU**

"No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us." Romans 8:37

What a blessing your prayers and support, along with Kelly's unwavering servanthood, have been during the time from October 10 until now. We have received many messages of encouragement and support from members of the congregation. I am touched and motivated by each one of them. I am more touched, however, by the love of our Lord Jesus, first of all that He cares so much for me, then that He has a plan for me in service to Him.

My recovery may take several more months, but the Lord will continue to be my guide through all that time. May you also feel the love of God in your life and be motivated to respond to it.

Dennis Sienicki

Well Done Thou Good and Faithful Servant are words spoken by Jesus to those who in faith minister to these who are in need. We had a church family in need of assistance with their rent and you, God's people of St. Paul's, generously ministered to them. A door offering of \$895.00 was collected that more than took care of the rent. The additional amount is now being kept for the next time one in our midst is in need of assistance. God gave us His Son and in the generosity of your giving shows your gratitude for that gift.



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

Come be a part of the Ladies Encouragement Group (LEG)! We have begun a new study. We meet in the Jerusalem Room on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month for Bible study. All ladies are invited! Our new study is Uninvited by Lysa TerKeurst. This study includes a video journey in the Holy Land to experience scripture like never before. It's a beautiful reminder to believe that we are destined for a love that can never be diminished, tarnished, shaken or taken. With Jesus you are always invited in. Books are available in the church office.



Ladies Encouragement Group  
Moving our feet, shining our light!

### **Board Briefs:**

#### **Christian Education:**

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

#### **Train up a Child...**

There has been some interest expressed in beginning a group for parents of younger children. There was an initial meeting held in November with some ideas presented. There will be another meeting during the Sunday School hour from 9:15-10:15 am on February 18<sup>th</sup> in the Gymnasium addition. The purpose of the group would be to help one another in their role as Christian parents in meeting the challenges of today's society. The Christian Board of Education has identified the book "30 Ways in 30 Days to Strengthen Your Family" by Rebecca Hagelin that the group may want to use for the basis of discussion. The book includes strategies for raising children of character. It emphasizes that parents have the most influence on their child. If there would be enough interest with parents of elementary and parents of infants through preschool, two groups could be considered. We have a book called, Faithfully Parenting Preschoolers, that could be used for parents of that age group.

The purpose of this meeting will be to make some decisions on how the group will work such as how often they will meet, when, in homes or at church, and the need for child care. If you have any questions about this meeting or if you are unable to attend and are interested in being included in this group, contact someone from the CBE. Members are Jason Russell, Barb Middaugh, Wendy Coxey, Lois Nielsen, and Jeanette Rettinger.

#### **Parish Fellowship:**

Men's Group takes place on Sundays, February 11<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup>, from 4-6pm for all men ages 15 and above. We will meet in the gym for basketball and fellowship and will close with a prayer.

Euchre Party is Friday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, from 7-9:00pm in the Bethany Room. Anyone 16 and older can join us for fun and fellowship, and please bring a snack to share. Please bring cards and a card table if possible. Beverages will be provided. Come and bring a friend!

Lenten Cookie Sign-up list is on the "Check It Out" Board by the school secretary's office.

**Stewardship:** A reminder : The budget for 2018 has increased by \$474 per week . Pray and remember this increase as you consider your tithes.

## **Boards cont.**

### **Youth:**

Jr. High Youth Nights:

Friday, February 2nd, 7-9PM in the gym

Friday, February 16th, 7-9PM in the gym

Jr. High and High School Youth Outing - On Sunday, February 11th, 1-4pm the youth in grades 6th through 12th grade are invited to go sledding/tubing at George Wilson Park in Mishawaka as long as there is snow. Please meet at the Church parking lot at 12:30pm, we will leave no later than 12:45pm. The Youth Board will cover the cost of admission and snow tube rental fee. You are welcome to bring your own sled as well. Please be sure that you are dressed appropriately for the weather. Please contact Mark Wildauer to sign-up and fill out a liability form in advance, no later than Sunday, February 4th. If there is no snow, we will be going to Quick Lanes Bowling in Plymouth that same day and time. The Youth Board will cover the cost of bowling and shoe rental. Bring money if you would like to purchase something at the concessions stand.

4th/5th Grade Youth Outing - On Sunday, February 18th, 1-4pm the youth in the 4th/5th grade are invited to go sledding/tubing at George Wilson Park in Mishawaka as long as there is snow. Please meet at the Church parking lot at 12:30pm, we will leave no later than 12:45pm. The Youth Board will cover the cost of admission and snow tube rental fee. You are welcome to bring your own sled as well. Please be sure that you are dressed appropriately for the weather. Please contact Mark Wildauer to sign-up and fill out a liability form in advance, no later than Sunday, February 11th. If there is no snow, we will be going to Quick Lanes Bowling in Plymouth that same day and time. The Youth Board will cover the cost of bowling and shoe rental. Bring money if you would like to purchase something at the concessions stand.

### Night of Hope with Tim Tebow

The Fellowship of Christian Athletes of Indiana is hosting a Night of Hope on Thursday, February 15th, 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM EST featuring Tim Tebow, who is a two-time national champion. Heisman trophy winner and champion of the Tim Tebow Foundation at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum at [4000 Parnell Avenue, Fort Wayne, IN, 46805](http://4000 Parnell Avenue, Fort Wayne, IN, 46805). This event is free, but you must register online on their website: [www.indianafca.org/nightofhope](http://www.indianafca.org/nightofhope). Doors open at 5:30PM. The Coliseum provides parking just outside the Arena at the cost of \$5 per vehicle for the general lot or \$8 for the preferred lot (cash only).

### **Altar Guild: February attendants are Theresa & Andy Heuberger.**

Altar Flowers in February:

4      Bruce and Ellen Augustine  
11  
18  
25      Carol Bowen



The Altar Flower Chart for the 2018 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.

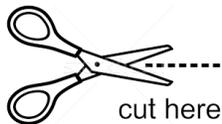
**Haitian Lutheran Mission Project News:**

The Haitian Lutheran Mission Project will be leaving for Haiti with a team on Sunday, January 14. We will be going to the Jeremie District working in the village of Moron. A teachers workshop and building benches for our new school below will be our focus. Our Lutheran Schools are making a difference in Haiti. Please help us keep them open by supporting one of our teachers for the remaining school year. The Haitian Lutheran Mission Project is the only ministry we are aware of that is committed to enrich the lives of these children through education, spiritual growth and nutrition. We struggle every month to pay the salaries of teachers so that they can feed their families and we can keep our schools open. We have 6 schools whose teachers salaries we are paying right now. LCMS has asked us to take on the teachers of 3 more schools in the Jeremie District. We have no funds available for these teachers but our hope is to get them into our micro loan program so that after 1 year they will be able to support them selves. This is a big leap of Faith for us. Salaries are \$50. a month if your heart is telling you to support a teacher we would be ever so grateful.

Blessings,  
Sue Gross

**Mission Project cont.**

The Mission Committee would like you to know that we have recently sent a check to the Haitian Lutheran Mission Project for \$1350.00 to help pay teachers. The money has been accumulating from donations made to "Hearts for Haiti". Please be encouraged to continue donating to their cause with your offerings enclosed in an envelope marked "Hearts for Haiti". The people of Haiti are so very grateful!



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A New Opportunity to Use Your Musical Skills! Ms. Stephanie Rennecker, our new 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, has volunteered to use her gifts and expertise in starting a new musical group that would share God’s Word through contemporary music with us in our worship services, like the New Beginning of old. The difference would be that she is looking for anyone who has instrumental and vocal ability from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade on up through adulthood. If you are interested please fill out this form and place it in the offering plate.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Instrument: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you be a vocalist?    Yes \_\_\_\_\_    No \_\_\_\_\_

The hope is to practice an hour one night a week. Circle two days a week that might work for you to practice.

Monday    Tuesday    Wednesday    Thursday    Friday    Saturday    Sunday

# SCHOOL NEWS AND NOTES

School Office phone: 546-2790

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

February 2018

Our theme for the 2017-2018 school year is It's Still All About Jesus, based on Hebrew 13:8 (ESV): "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." We give thanks to God for His unchanging grace toward us all!

OUR SPECIAL CHAPEL emphasis for January & February is Seminarian Support. Our offerings will go to support our congregation's adopted seminarians; plus we donate \$20 per month to our Tuition Aid Fund.

If you would like to donate to this project please contact St. Paul's School office.

BASKETBALL: There are still a number of basketball games coming up, both home and away. Check the church calendar for the upcoming games.

St. Paul's is sponsoring 5<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> grade teams tournament in our gym on Saturday, February 17. Our 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade team took first place in our Invitational Tournament on January 13.

FYI: Mrs. Middaugh will be filling in as our Kindergarten teacher for the rest of this year when Mrs. VanSoest goes on maternity leave.

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. 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.



## February Devotion: **More than words!**

*(God said) "This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me."  
Matthew 15:8*

My grandfather used to say, "Any job worth doing is worth doing well," which takes us to the sad story of Mr. A.K. Verma.

For decades Mr. Verma had boasted that he held a job as executive engineer at the Central Public Works Department in India. Yes, Mr. Verma had *had* a job, but you could hardly say that he had *done that job well*.

Actually, he had done his job very badly. This is why, against the protests of India's labor unions, Mr. Verma has been terminated. And if you're wondering why he no longer serves as an executive engineer of the Public Works, well, I can tell you. Mr. Verma was canned because he hadn't bothered to show up for work since December ... that's December of 1990. It's true. Mr. Verma hadn't punched in at work for almost two and a half decades.

When an inquiry found him "guilty of willful absence from duty," it didn't bother him. When he was ordered back to work, he didn't go. Mr. Verma was proud to boast about his job, but his heart just wasn't in it.

This, according to Jesus, pretty much describes the Pharisees of His time and age. The Savior points out how those ultra-religious guys went through the motions of honoring the Lord; they made the sacrifices; they were proud to say the prayers at the proper time, but their hearts just weren't in their worship or their thankfulness. And, unless they changed, they ended up being eternally terminated.

Now so far this devo has spoken of an engineer in India and Pharisees from long-ago Israel. Maybe it's time to address the people we know who bear a resemblance to Mr. A.K. Verma.

You probably do know some folks like him, don't you? They claim to be Christian, but \* long ago, when they were confirmed, they promised they would be faithful until death, but they haven't kept that promise; \* long ago, when they were married, they said Jesus would be the unseen Guest in their home, but they've moved a few times since then, and never invited Him to come with; \* long ago, at Baptism they promised a Christian education for their children, but the little ones don't know their pastor's name, and he doesn't know theirs.

Yes, we all know and love these people. This is why I suggest we all might want to speak to our *Mr. Vermas* and invite them back to church and the Savior. By the Holy Spirit's power, let's get their hearts engaged in praise of Him who gave His life for their forgiveness and salvation.

**THE PRAYER:** Dear Lord, I give thanks You have called me to faith in my Savior. Now I pray for those who are close to me, but may have wandered from You. Send the Holy Spirit upon us so that we may worship You with our tongues and hearts. In Jesus' Name I ask it. Amen.