



The Epistle

**The Monthly Parish Visitor of:
St. Paul Lutheran Church, Tampa, Florida**

January 2011
Volume 56
Number 1



**God's mission for St. Paul Lutheran
Church is to witness God's love and our
faith in the Resurrected Christ.**



Dear Friends in Christ,

I hope you all had a fantastic and wonderful Christmas. I know I did. Lisa and I wish to thank you all for the wonderful card and gift for Christmas. Thank you much.

Our nation's economy has been a mess now for years. It does look promising, though, for the future. Have we turned the corner? I have noticed more job openings being listed in the Tampa Bay area and I find this encouraging. The holiday season has returned to being about seeing old friends and family and having a good time. Our worship experience was wonderful. I was quite excited, as usual, celebrating the birth of our Lord and Savior. Our worship space abounded with smiles, a plethora of smiles this year. There seemed to be less stress.

But not everyone is out of the water. There are still some of our sisters and brothers who are experiencing loss or struggling with health or financial issues. They need our touch of love. Keep the prayers and love coming for them.

Personally my own health is at 90% and rising. Prednisone continues to make me gain weight as well as depleting my body of Vitamin D and increasing the pressure in my eyes. Except for that, I am well as everything else continues to improve. So I take mega doses of vitamin D. I have these eye drops I use to alleviate the increase in eye pressure and they work great. I laugh, though, because this comes at a price. It appears these eye drops will eventually turn my blue-green eyes brown. I find it fascinating.

IMPORTANT CHURCH INFORMATION

**The deadline for the February Epistle is
January 25, 2011.**

St. Paul Lutheran Church (ELCA)

A member of New Parish of Tampa with Faith Lutheran Church

The church is located just west of I-275 at the Hillsborough Avenue exit and three blocks south on Central Avenue. Worship services with Holy Communion are held at 11am each Sunday.

You may reach the church office at (813) 239-3113, or by email stpaulslutherantpa@verizon.net. Office hours are available Tuesday & Wednesday from 10am-1pm. Or by Appointment.

Find us on the web at www.stpaultampa.org





Notes from the Secretary

I wanted to thank everyone for being so patient and understanding with my mistakes. I'm sure in time it will become much easier.

I would also like to thank New Bite Serenity Group replaced the microwave in the kitchen, since we are kind enough to allow the to use our facilities.

Sincerely,

Paula Chamberlain

The Christmas spirit is still alive in my home and I hope it is in yours. Life is life, and sometimes we have situations that are challenging. But we have the fulfillment of prophesy in the birth of Jesus and the promise and hope we find in his eventual second coming. Until then, Christmas points us toward cherishing peace and goodwill towards all humanity. Christmas returns us to a life of wonder and amazement.

We continue to treasure Christmas, a happy time, a time that returns us to our own more youthful days. No doubts taint Christmas. No fears taint Christmas. Many of us embrace our childlike faith again. We actually do remember the true meaning of Christmas. We give gifts and we give laughter and love and smiles and joy. We do because God has given us salvation in taking on humanity in the birth of Jesus; and for this we give God thanks and praise. Like children, we continue to appreciate all God has done for us.

Blessings to you and all your loved ones,
pr-ray

President's Report

The end of the year is upon us already, can you believe it, the years just seem to go by faster and faster for me it seems. I think the year of 2010 has been a good year for us here at St Paul, we have been able to work on some projects around here that have needed to be worked on for a long time. St Paul has also made a few additions, with the digital organ and its new pipes and the Memorial Garden. The two story garage has been pulled back from its possible demolition and now has the potential for a youth area on the second floor. I hope you feel as I do that we have turned the corner as a congregation. We have a great relationship and partnership with Seminole Presbyterian and I am hoping to keep the momentum going for us in 2011. This will require us as a congregation to make a commitment towards keeping the momentum we have moving forward. We are a small congregation and the more we can share the load of the responsibilities, the easier it is for everyone. The council is working on the 2011 budget to bring to you for a vote in January, so do not forget to turn in your pledge cards. I want to wish everyone a happy and blessed Christmas season and new year.

Wayne Toltzman

Witness Ministry

For the last few months Witness Ministry has been focused on improving our St. Paul Lutheran website. Allan Moberg is keeping the website up to date with photos and current information about church activities. Check it out! You'll see pictures from Santa Lucia Sunday, Las Posadas, and the Christmas Eve candlelight service. Our website is www.stpaultampa.org

Our website continues to attract couples looking for a church wedding. We've been showing the sanctuary, answering emails and phone calls, and booking weddings. Liz and Mike Wilson created two courtesy kits with emergency supplies for the brides and grooms getting married at our church. They are ready to be put to use for the next non-member wedding in February.

We continue to put messages on the A-frame sign in the front by the driveways. What would make you notice our church? We send emails to our members with reminders about upcoming events. Watch for incoming emails from St. Paul Lutheran – they will keep you informed about special events.

Future Witness projects include a new outside banner with spotlights. Ideas?? Let us know.



We are getting the word out. Our church is perfect for weddings!

We are getting calls and emails asking about using our church for non-member weddings. Couples are discovering our church on-line at our website: www.StPaulTampa.org. We already have three weddings booked with deposits for 2011.

Weddings are a great way to use our facility, gain greater visibility in the community and build possible relationships! This is a good thing for our church.

Witness Ministry has been working on promoting these non-member weddings. We have written a Wedding Contract for couples to sign. We have a Wedding page on our newly designed website. And, we need more help.

Are you interested in helping as one of the **church wedding coordinators**? It involves communicating with the bridal couples, showing the sanctuary and Lounge, answering questions about our policies, unlocking the church for rehearsals and wedding ceremonies, setting the air conditioning temperature, turning on the microphone system, and trouble-shooting during the rehearsals and ceremonies. If you can help, please talk with Ann Delach.

Treasurer's Report

OFFERTORY RECAP	Total for December	Year to Date
Envelope Offertory	\$4,788	\$53,652
Electronic Offertory	\$230	\$2,793
Loose Plate Offertory	\$841	\$10,331
Total Offertory for Month	<u>\$5,859</u>	<u>\$65,936</u>
Accumulated Offertory* / Budget*	95.1%	90.8%
* Excludes Rent / Bldg Use / Faith's Support		
Haiti Donation	\$0	\$801
World hunger Coinage Offertory	\$3	\$102
Metropolitan Ministry	Material Gifts + 300	\$400

Report prepared by Patti Tolman, Financial Secretary & Lewis Balsizer, Treasurer

Worship Schedule January 2011

Jan 2 AM Ann Delach
AC Braxton McKenzie
CR Cameron McKenzie

Jan 9 AM Fred Prisley
AC Delaney Cullinan
CR Audrey McKenzie

Jan 16 AM Linda Cox
AC Ryan Williams
CR Cameron McKenzie

Jan 23 AM Kevin Oliva
AC Audrey McKenzie
CR Braxton McKenzie

Jan 30 AM Natalie Benkan
AC Delaney Cullin
CR Ryan Williams

Altar Guild Becky McKenzie & Mary O' Dea Cullin

Counters Lewis Balsizer

Ushers **Jan 2** Bob Williams, Bob, Delach, Jim Clark,
Wayne Tolman & Pete Campbell
Jan 9
Jan 16 Lewis Balsizer, Patty Tolzman & Becky Cameron
Jan 23
Jan 30 June Kiepke & Alice Spafford

Greeters **Jan 2** Bob Delach & Jim Clark
Jan 9 Alice Spafford & June Kiepke
Jan 16 Pat Smith & Donna Prisley
Jan 23 Lewis Balsizer & Bob Delach
Jan 30 June Kiepke & Alice Spafford

If you can't keep your scheduled day, please find a replacement for that day. Thanks, Church Staff.

Website and Email blasts

We have tried our best to keep our website up to date and interesting for our church members and people looking for a church home. Virtually all of our first time visitors have told us they come because of the information they received from our website. I am not an expert in this field, I have learned a great deal by trial and error or by help from my son-in-law, Bob Williams. Trevor and Leanne did a tremendous job in setting up this website for us to keep up.

I am deeply disappointed in the number of people who do not bother to open up the emails that we send to you informing you of things that are going on in the church. People have told us that our church lacks communication and email seems to be the quickest and best way to keep you informed. I am trying to make it a beautiful yet informative email instead of just words. If you have any comments, or suggestions, please let me know. If you don't receive our "blasts" we don't have your email address.

Allan Moberg



Liberia: Lifted “from where the world dropped us”

Thanks to your gifts to Stand With Africa, directed through partner Lutheran World Relief (LWR), essential medications are once again available to patients in hospitals and health clinics throughout Liberia.

The Christian Health Association of Liberia (CHAL), one of the country’s oldest non-governmental organizations, represents five hospitals and 39 clinics in the war-torn country and serves approximately 40 percent of the population. Its medical warehouse was looted and stripped during Liberia’s 15-year civil war. Now, though, its shelves are restocked, thanks to your generous gifts. LWR partner organization Interchurch Medical Assistance coordinated the procurement and shipment of the medicines and supplies.

Adoley Sonii, president of the CHAL board of directors, said the gift of restocking the warehouse “has lifted us from where the world dropped us.”

With peace recently restored in Liberia, hope has resurfaced, reconstruction has begun, and thousands of internally displaced persons are returning home. But even with the return of normalcy, health facilities without enough medical supplies have often been forced to send patients to outside vendors to buy medications of unknown quality at exorbitant prices. Now, Kashito Chea, the officer in charge at one of the CHAL clinics, says he is “dancing with joy” at the thought of again being able to offer his patients full treatment with a reliable supply of medicines.



Dates to remember:

January 6 The Epiphany of our Lord begins.

January 8 @ 8:30 AM Take down Christmas decorations.

@ 1:00, 1st Communion Class at Faith

January 9 @ 12:00-12:30, Confirmation Class.

January 11 @ 7:00pm Council Meeting.

January 16 (After Service) *The Lunch Bunch*
@ *Red Lobster (Busch Blvd).*

Enjoy good food and good company. Please let Pat Smith know if you are interested, so reservation can be made..

January 19 Pastor Strawn will be out, and will return on February 10th.

January 23 *Congregational Meeting.* (After Service)
We also have pot luck lunch in the dining hall in celebration of our new year program.

January 30 Pastor Horn will preside over Worship Services.

February 6th *YOUTH WORSHIP SERVICE*
Ryan Williams guest speaker & Pastor John Keene to preside over holy communion.

Fellowship Committee

On December 5, 2010, we had a good social for the Bishop, that followed church. Thank you to all who brought food and drinks.

The Advent dinners had gone well; we just need more people there.

The Lunch Bunch will begin again in January 2011. The first luncheon will be January 16, 2011@ 12:30 at Red Lobster on (Busch Blvd). Please let Pat know in advance if you will be attending in order to make proper reservations.

There will be a Pot Luck dinner following the Congregational Meeting on January 23, 2011. A sign up sheet will be posted for what you will bring.

I hope everyone has a blessed Christmas and New Year. Please be safe and happy.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Smith



Watch dear Lord, with those who wake, watch over, or weep. Tend the sick, rest the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous. In your love give us all this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Dee Anne Bennett, Barbara Bernardo, Jean Boggs, Sharron Bush, Kenneth Campbell, Cooper Carothers, Dave & Rose Demko, Frank Don Grooms, Margaret Elliott, Gene Eikeland, Celia Feick, Linda Glore, Annie Goldsmith, Lesley Hale, Justin Hall, Terri Hansen, Glenn Hommert, Fern Irwin, Joseph Lamberger Sr., Carol Llosa, Belle Mitchell, Isabelle Morrell, Norma Morrell, Betty Osborne, Pastor Ray Strawn, Tammie Penn, Blanche Philamalee, Michele Pippin, Misty Pressey, Jack Prisley, Jean Purcell, Shirley Robinson, Mona Rounds, Dot Servis, Betty Sherrill, Alice Spafford, Ann Steele, James Steele, Patricia Stitt, Tori Stitt, Mel & Elizabeth Stroupe, Kathy Stroupe, Joyce Tetlow, Diane Tolzman, Robert Williams Sr.

Please help us keep our list up to date. Call the office with any changes that need to be made.

January Birthdays

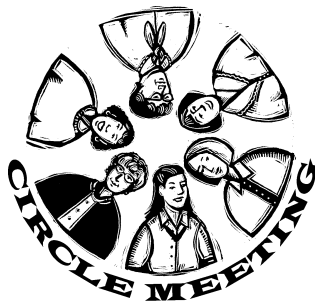
1/1 Walter Black
1/3 Andie McMahon
1/4 Holly Parrish
1/4 Shirley Robinson
1/10 Michelle Garner
1/10 Terri Hansen
1/14 Dorrett Jones
1/15 Mike Delach
1/17 Aiden Mallo
1/17 Alexis Mallo
1/21 Yohannes Tulu
1/25 Leslie Gass
1/26 Kevin Oliva
1/27 Liz Wilson
1/28 Liz Adgie
1/31 Cole Matthew Delach

January Anniversaries

1/16 Shannon & Charlie Adcock

PHOEBE CIRCLE-January 17th at 1:30pm
Hostess: Marilyn Weisz

REBECCA CIRCLE-January 20th at 7:30pm
Leader: Carol Moberg



A Great Evening!

Las Posadas, the Mexican Christmas Celebration, sponsored by the Sunday School Staff on December 19th, was a huge success. We had approximate attendance of 38 people including the Associate Pastor from Seminole Presbyterian and his family. The weather was perfectly cool, inspiring us to sing well and enjoy the warm fire and marshmallows. One of Kaleigh Williams's teachers at Lee Elementary lives on Seminole by the Church. She graciously secured four Inns (homes) for us to "check on" to find room for Jesus birth. Our last home before returning to the church (or the stable) was former member, Barb Toepke, and she also joined us. We enjoyed our Taco's and trimmings around a roaring fire visiting with new and old church friends while the children played. It really was a great, warm and fuzzy evening to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Many thanks to all who helped in any way, contributing food, time and extra hands - it was all appreciated. As we drove home, I commented on the great evening and said that I guess it means we may have to do it again next year!!

Blessings for the New Year,
Carol Moberg and the Sunday School Staff