



*"Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."
(Ephesians 6:17)*

Sword of the Spirit

www.splcmv.org

VOLUME 7 ISSUE 2

FEBRUARY 2012

Pastor's Message

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In just a few weeks, we will begin our observance of Lent with Ash Wednesday. The season of Lent has historically been a catechetical (teaching) and penitential season in preparation for the events of Holy Week culminating in the Resurrection of our Lord. Lent lasts forty days from Ash Wednesday to Easter, not counting Sundays. The Sundays in this season are called Sundays in Lent rather than Sundays of Lent. This language is intended to highlight the fact that every Sunday is a celebration of the Resurrection victory of our Redeemer. The preparatory character of Lent should not be allowed to obscure the fact that we are already living each week in the reality of Christ's death and resurrection.

In the early centuries of the Church, it was common practice that during Holy Week new converts of all ages would be baptized, confirmed, and then commune on Easter. In this context, Lent served as a forty-day period of intense instruction in the faith. Candidates for membership in the Church would be instructed in the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, Baptism, Confirmation, and the Lord's Supper.

As these candidates were forsaking the sinful lifestyles of the world and beginning new lives as Christians, repentance naturally became a major theme of Lent. Over time, particularly as there were less new converts in proportion to the number of people growing up in the Church, this theme of repentance came to be the primary emphasis in Lent.

While we who are already members of the Church have no need to rejoin, our yearly observance of Lent is a vivid reminder of our need for daily repentance. Repentance is not just a matter of conversion to faith. Nor, as our Lenten series will emphasize, is it just about feeling sorry for our sins. Lent is not the season of "woe is me" or "aren't I terrible." The repentance of the season of Lent is about leaving behind the world and our sin and entering into the joy of the kingdom of God. Hebrews 12:1-2 beautifully expresses this kind of repentance:

"Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (NKJV)

In this way, our Lenten preparation for death and resurrection of Jesus is an image of our lifelong preparation for our own death and resurrection with eternal life in Jesus. May God grant that this Lenten season our eyes may be so fixed on Jesus that we may run the race of faith and share in His joy.

In Christ, Pastor Hansen

And now
faith,
hope,
and **love** abide,
these three;
and the greatest
of these is
love
1 Corinthians 13.13

St. Paul Lutheran Church

600 5th Avenue SW
Mount Vernon, IA
52314
(319) 895-8772
www.splcmv.org

Rev. Sean Hansen
Pastor

Crysten Sanchez,
Director of Family
Life Ministry

Email:
pastor@splcmv.org
info@splcmv.org
secretary@splcmv.org
youth@splcmv.org

Sunday:


Sunday School : 8am
Worship: 9am
Fellowship: 10am
Bible Study: 10:15am

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS	2
LENT BEGINS	3
SUMMER CAMP INFORMATION	5



Christian Education

SUNDAY  **SCHOOL** On **Sunday, February 12** the Sunday School youth will be singing at Hallmark Care Center during the Sunday School hour and also during the 9am worship service. We'll start Sunday School at 8am and leave for the care center at 8:15. Contact Sonya Sullivan if you have questions.

Mission Update: The Sunday School youth have surpassed their goal of \$150. Great job Sunday School youth!! We are going to continue to collect mission contributions through May. We will continue to update the wall. We are also asking for matching funds from congregation members. Matching contributions may be given to Sonya Sullivan or placed in the offering plate designated "Sunday School Mission Matching." We appreciate your support!

Vacation Bible School

Picture sunny days, green grass and the kids are out of school for the summer...It's hard to imagine, but it's time to start planning for Vacation Bible School! It's time to think about who will be our VBS director. Maybe YOU would like an opportunity to serve that includes choosing the dates, selecting the materials, coordinating VBS leaders and volunteers, etc. You wouldn't have to do it alone. The past VBS directors will help you, and the manual tells you everything you need to do. Interested in learning more? Contact Sue Margheim at 895-4015 or Julie Baumler at 455-2445.

10:15am Bible Study

Join us after worship for a Bible study on worship. Starting on Sunday, January 29, we will be using the LifeLight program to study Christian worship. The program includes study questions during the week, discussion and lectures. The class will begin after service (10:15-10:30) and end by 11:30.



Newsletter articles for the March newsletter will be due to Tracy by Sunday, February 19

Online Pictorial Directory

Our 2011 Lifetouch Pictorial Directory is now available online. To access the directory, go to www.splcmv.org and click on the link that is posted on the home page below the staff pictures. Each member has their own user id and password. All members listed in the directory roster receive an id and password even if your picture was not taken. A letter with your user information and details on how to utilize the online directory as well as updating your personal profile has been placed in your church mailbox. Please pick up your information the next time you are in church.

If you have any questions, please call the church office at 895-8772. Office hours are M-F 8:30am - 12:30pm.

Sound System Addition

We are considering adding an addition to our sound system to help the hearing impaired. We need to know the number of people that would use this service. Please email secretary@splcmv.org or contact Jeff Adrian if you need help hearing the worship service. Contact Jeff Adrian for more information.

Cornell Care Packages

Care packages will be available for Cornell students attending the **February 5** worship service. Care package will be distributed the first Sunday of every month.

Altar Flowers

There is a flower chart for 2012 posted on the bulletin board. If you would like to provide altar flowers, please sign your name and write the occasion for which the flowers are being provided.

Lutheran Hour Ministries Sunday is February 5. For more than 90 years, Lutheran Hour Ministries has spread the message of salvation through Jesus Christ around the world. Join in celebrating the vibrant witness of LHM; stand up together and declare like apostles, "We are witnesses of these things!" Learn more about Lutheran Hour Ministries at www.lhm.org.



Lent

God's Gift of Forgiveness

Lent, in most Christian denominations, is the forty-day liturgical season of fasting and prayer before Easter. The forty days represent the time Jesus spent in the desert, where, according to the Bible, he endured temptation by Satan.

The Lenten season is a time of spiritual renewal. Lent prepares the believer—through prayer, penitence, almsgiving and self-denial—for the annual commemoration of the death and resurrection of Jesus, as celebrated during Holy Week.

The three Sundays before Ash Wednesday are collectively called Pre-Lent. The unusual names for these Sundays – *Septuagesima*, *Sexagesima*, and *Quinquagesima* – are simply the Latin words for "seventieth", "sixtieth", and "fiftieth" respectively. As Lent is 40 days plus Sundays, these Pre-Lent Sundays are approximately seventy, sixty, and fifty days before the Resurrection of our Lord. This Pre-Lent time serves to shift our worship from the celebration and glory of Christmas,

Epiphany, and the Transfiguration to the humility of Ash Wednesday and Lent.

Lent begins on **Ash Wednesday, February 22**. The theme of this year's Lenten series is "God's Gift of Forgiveness" and will focus on repentance and forgiveness.

The Wednesday evening schedule during Lent is as follows:

- 5:15 p.m. Supper
- 6:30 p.m. Lenten Worship Service
- 7:15 p.m. Midweek (not held 2/22 or 3/14)

The majority of the Lenten suppers will be provided by the church youth with funds raised going toward youth activities.

Two Lenten devotions will be available to the congregation in February. "God's Gift of Forgiveness" corresponds with the sermon series chosen for this Lenten season. The other is from Lutheran Hour Ministries and is entitled "Jesus Christ: Man On A Mission." This devotional explores the early life and ministry of Jesus brought into sharp focus through the powerful words of the Gospel of Mark.

Statistical Report Summary 2011

OUR STATEMENT OF MISSION: In grateful response to God's grace and empowered by the Holy Spirit through Word and Sacraments, the mission of St. Paul Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is to share the love of Christ by word and deed within our church, our community, and our world.

We are Christ's Love in Action!

Pastoral Acts 2011:

- Baptisms: 3**
- Confirmation & First Communion: 3**
- Weddings: 1**
- Funerals: 3**
- New Members Received: 22**
- Transfer Out, etc. (removed from roster): 2**

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
Total Baptized Membership:	264	265	274	263	265	258	238	257	274
Total Confirmed Membership:	201	202	211	195	200	201	176	190	198
Average Sunday Worship Attendance:	100	99	99	105	105	81	88	76	86



News from Director of Family Life



At the beginning of February, on the 2nd to be specific, we celebrate Groundhog Day. The tradition is that Punxsutawney Phil, the groundhog that lives in Punxsutawney, PA comes out of his hole to see if there will be more winter or if spring will come sooner. If he sees his shadow, there will be six more weeks of winter. If he does not, there will be an early spring. There's a very funny movie about this from the 1990's where a man has to relive the same day (Groundhog Day) over and over again until something changes. It got me thinking about repetition. There is a lot of repetition in the church. Our services on Sunday morning typically follow a very specific rubric, to the point where, after a couple months of participating, you can almost do the whole thing by heart. This isn't a bad thing! As they say, practice makes perfect, and how better to learn and meditate on God's Word than coming together in corporate worship and praying the very Word He has given us.

This month is pretty quiet for the Jr. High youth group. We have midweek like normal for the first few Wednesdays of the month from 6:30-8:00pm. We do not have midweek on Wednesday, February 22nd due to Ash Wednesday. There is a service at 6:30pm that everyone is invited to attend. We'll begin serving Lenten meals on Wednesday, February 29th with the schedule that matches Advent. It is as follows: 4:30pm – Meal prep, 5:15pm – Meal serving, 6:30pm – Worship, 7:15pm – Class. Be watching for a list of the meals.

We will only have one Sr. High youth night this month. That will be Sunday, February 12th from 6:00-8:00pm like normal at church. We will have a Super Bowl party at my house on Sunday, February 5th starting at 5:00pm. Come for food, games and to cheer on your favorite team! You are welcome to bring friends. St. Paul Lutheran Chapel in Iowa City is hosting their 2nd annual High School weekend on Saturday-Sunday, February 18-19th. We'll be taking a group to this, so be watching for more information on that.

The youth attending Higher Things this summer will begin selling Butter Braids on Sunday, February 12th and sell until Sunday, March 11th. Each braid is \$12.00, delicious, and provides you an easy way to support the youth group! We'll have our next Higher Things meeting on Sunday, March 4th at 5:00pm.

The Youth Board will meet on Monday, February 6th at 7:30pm. Note the time change!

God has blessed His church, where we receive so much. We hear and learn about Him, the work that He accomplished through Jesus dying on the cross and rising again to save us from our sins. The repetition that we experience on Sunday mornings, Wednesday nights and any other time we are immersed in God's Word serves as another way to deliver this message: Jesus Christ has come into this world and saved you.

Repeating with you,

Crysten Sanchez
Director of Family Life Ministry
319.389.0105
youth@splcmv.org

Donations Needed!

The Priscilla Guild is collecting items for personal care kits for Lutheran World Relief. Items needed for one kit are as follows:

- One bath-size towel, approx. 52" x 27" (dark color recommended)
- Two bath-size bars of soap (4-5 oz. any brand) in original package
- One adult-size toothbrush in its original packaging
- One sturdy comb
- One metal nail clippers

Place donations in the basket in the Narthex. Please donate whatever items you can, you do not have to donate a whole kit. Every little bit helps!

In case of inclement weather, please refer to KCRG, KWVL, or KGAN for church closing information. In the event that time precludes closing, use safety and godly common sense as a guide!



Thank You

Thank you to all who helped deliver Meals on Wheels in December: Carol Wulf, Dennis & Cheryl Uthof, Julie Golberg, Dale Maas, Florence Hill & Lorena Freiburger.

Summer Camp



SUMMER REGISTRATION FOR CAMP IO-DIS-E-CA is now open. Early bird deadlines are Feb. 13 and April 16. Scholarships are available to campers who come from family units that have never before sent children to

Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca. See the flyer on the bulletin board for more information. Some registration forms are available on the main table in the Narthex, or go to www.campiodiseca.org to register online.

Financial aid money has been made available through our church to help youth experience Camp Io-Dis-E-Ca this summer. We would like for the money to go to youth who would not be able to otherwise experience camp due to financial limitations. This money would be available to help with those situations. Depending on the interest, an entire registration may be covered. If you have a child, or know of a child or family who would benefit from this opportunity, please contact Crysten at 319-389-0105 or youth@splcmv.org. If you need more information about which camps are available and when they are happening, there are brochures on the table in the Narthex or go to www.campiodiseca.org.

SEND A CARD

Max Low is a 13-year-old boy who is fighting Leukemia, and has a wish to receive one million cards. Latest count is 600,000+. Please send Max a card and help make his wish come true. His address: Mighty Max Low, P. O. Box 111, Neola, IA 52559. Share this with friends and co-workers.

Special Service at Trinity

THE PURIFICATION OF MARY & PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD is a principal feast of Christ and will be celebrated at Trinity Lutheran Church in Cedar Rapids on **Thursday, February 2nd at 6pm**. Come follow the mother of our Lord to the temple to present the Lamb of God as we gather at church for the presentation of that Lamb to us in His Word. See with Simeon our Lord's salvation as we too hold the Messiah in our hands as we receive the Sacrament. This is a special service called Candlemas, in which we will use our individual candles during the service and hear a special guest preacher, Rev. Max Mons of St. Paul's Lutheran Chapel, Iowa City. May the Light of the World illumine our darkness!

Rural & Small Town Mission

Rural & Small Town Mission exist to support and encourage congregations in rural and small town settings in their work to engage their communities with the love of Christ. St. John Lutheran Church in Waverly, Iowa is hosting "Engaging Rural Communities Event" on **Saturday, Feb. 25** from 8am to 3pm. Participants will examine their communities and consider ways in which they can serve the unique needs of their particular communities. Registration will close at 50 participants and is due February 17. For more information, please contact Pastor Hansen.

Hymn Festival 2012

"Consider Now What God Has Done" will be presented by junior high and high school choirs, handbells and instrumentalists from St. John Lutheran Church and School of Seward, NE on **Thursday, March 8** at 7pm at Trinity Lutheran Church in Cedar Rapids. Call 366-1569 for more information.

The Sixth Judicial Dist. Dept. of Corrections is looking for adults to mentor offenders in transition. Adult mentoring, along with other programs provided through the Dept. of Corrections, have proven to significantly reduce recidivism, in effect, making our community safer. For more information, contact Abbie Anderson at 319.730.1177 or abbie.anderson@iowa.gov.

***Birthdays & Anniversaries***

Please be sure your birthday or anniversary is listed here. If your special day is missing please let the church office know so it can be included. ***God bless your special day!***

Chuck Babcock	February 2
Makenzie Frey	February 2
Payton McCarty	February 2
Gloria Krob	February 4
Russ Warner	February 4
James Slach	February 6
Madison McCarty	February 6
Erica Church	February 6
Kage Fox	February 8
Boe Brendes	February 12
Jacob Hanselman	February 13
Sue Ripke	February 14
Matthew Bany	February 17
Katelyn Baumler	February 18
Nicole Spiess	February 19
Karin Blankenhagen	February 21
Cheryl Uthof	February 24
Todd Parmenter	February 25
Lillian Johnson	February 29

Anniversaries

Dennis & Wilma Williams	February 10
Dennis & Cheryl Uthof	February 28

Prayer Corner!

Evelyn Berends, Recovery from illness
 Jim Schmidt, Bronchitis
 Susan Schmidt, Eye infection
 Lorena Freiburger, Seeking treatment for migraines
 Alycia Bentley (Niece of Kay Hertzler), Pain from Crohn's disease
 Matt Wieben (Carla's nephew), Brain cancer
 Marjorie Legband (Rebecca Hansen's mother) Cancer
 Allan Legband (Rebecca's father) Hospitalized for depression
 Bernice Cords (LeaAnn's mother) Heart surgery
 Birth of Ahdley Freiburger (grandchild of Gene & Lorena)
 Family of Bonnie Moore, Death
 Family of Mort Mortensen, Death
 Family Jenny Husmann (Kim Husmann's niece), Death
 Family of Al Clark, Death (Curt Taylor's friend)
 Family of David Wilcox, Sr., Death

Serving the Lord in February**Sunday, February 5 (Communion)****Elder:** Gary Spiess**Acolyte:** Makenzie Frey**Ushers/Greeters:** Gene & Lorena Freiburger**Organ Program:** Lacys**Sunday, Feb. 12****Elder:** Mike Lacy**Acolyte:** Gunnar Hageman**Ushers/Greeters:** Rich Krob & Tex Clay**Organ Program:** Mike Church**Sunday, Feb. 19 (Communion)****Elder:** Curt Taylor**Acolyte:** Nicole Margheim**Ushers/Greeters:** Kelly & Nicki Hanselman**Organ Program:** Lacys**Wednesday, Feb. 22 Ash Wednesday****6:30pm (Communion)****Elder:** Mike Lacy**Acolyte:** Payton McCarty**Crucifer:** Cale Snedden**Ushers/Greeters:** Gene & Lorena Freiburger**Organ Program:** Sue Lacy**Sunday, Feb. 26****Elder:** Scott Baumler**Acolyte:** Noelle Ossenkop**Ushers/Greeters:** Sr. High Youth**Organ Program:** Papes**Wednesday, Feb. 29****6:30pm****Acolyte:** Gabe Golberg**Ushers/Greeters:** Jane Shaw**Organ Program:** Lacys

Treasurer's Report

St. Paul Lutheran Church, Mt. Vernon, IA
Prepared 1/8/12 by Kim Spiess

Respectfully submitted, Kim Spiess, Treasurer

	<u>Jan - Dec</u> <u>11</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>\$ Over</u> <u>Budget</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
Contributions	171,465	146,570	24,895
Investment Earnings	122		
Total Income	<u>171,587</u>	<u>146,570</u>	<u>25,017</u>
Expense			
Director of Family Life	19,679	19,860	-181
District Support	12,020	12,000	20
Pastoral Support	55,031	81,700	-26,669
Religious Leadership	4,234	5,320	-1,086
Music Department	2,977	2,200	777
Christian Education	1,916	2,150	-234
Administration	14,515	14,050	465
Church Property	11,120	13,840	-2,720
Payroll Expenses	2,193	2,700	-507
Total Expense	<u>123,685</u>	<u>153,820</u>	<u>-30,135</u>
Net Ordinary Income	47,902	-7,250	55,152

Balance Sheet

	<u>Dec 31, 11</u>		
ASSETS		Total Board Funds	51,921.64
Current Assets		Special Gifts	
Checking/Savings		Memorials	3,143.15
Mt Vernon Checking	13,250.32	Helping Hand Fund	<u>106.27</u>
Mt Vernon Savings	<u>60,304.99</u>	Total Special Gifts	<u>3,249.42</u>
Total Checking/Savings	73,555.31	Total Long Term Funds	55,171.06
Other Current Assets			
Petty Cash	<u>268.81</u>		
Total Other Current Assets	<u>268.81</u>		
Total Current Assets	73,824.12		
Other Assets			
Loan to Rev Hansen	26,892.09		
Helping Hand	106.27		
Curian Capital Endowment Fund	<u>27,829.01</u>		
Total Other Assets	<u>54,827.37</u>		
TOTAL ASSETS	<u><u>128,651.49</u></u>		
LIABILITIES & EQUITY			
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Other Current Liabilities			
Payroll Liabilities	<u>1,630.45</u>		
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>1,630.45</u>		
Total Current Liabilities	<u>1,630.45</u>		
Total Liabilities	1,630.45		
Equity			
Current Funds			
hearing	290.00		
Board Funds			
Building Endowment	197.55		
Trustee	<u>40,000.00</u>		
Total Board Funds	40,197.55		
Special Gifts			
Memorials	<u>6,317.12</u>		
Total Special Gifts	6,317.12		
Thrivent	<u>469.65</u>		
Total Current Funds	47,274.32		
Long Term Funds			
Board Funds			
Building Endowment	<u>51,921.64</u>		