



The Spirit of St. Paul's

NOVEMBER 2025

Preparing for our synod's 2026 convention

As a congregation within Lutheran Church-Canada, it is important to participate in this synod to which we belong.

Each congregation is entitled to have a lay delegate attend the synod's every-four-years convention. To be the delegate is both an honour and a commitment. Nominations for someone to serve as our delegate are to be submitted to the church office by November 9.

We also have the privilege of submitting names of pastors for a number of positions: president, vice president, regional pastor and circuit counsellor. Some members may know many pastors, others only a few. Regardless, prayerfully consider those whom you know and if you think they would be a good fit for one of the positions, please submit the name(s) to the church office by November 9. It is not necessary to seek the person's permission, that is the task of the nominating committee.

All nominations will be ratified at a meeting of the voters following Divine Service on November 23.



Deck the Mitten Tree

The Mitten Tree is an annual ingathering of mittens, toques and scarves coordinated by St. Paul's LWML. This year's donations will keep many people, young and old, warm this winter. The tree will be put up on November 23 and taken down on December 14.

The items collected will be donated to the Global Gathering Place whose mission is to engage and support immigrants and refugees to integrate and thrive in Canadian society. They help refugees and immigrants navigate everything from language, healthcare, and employment to developing life skills many of us do without thinking (like grocery shopping and taking the bus).

Their centre includes an English language classroom, a daycare centre and the main reception area. And of course, they also provide warm winter clothing to their clients.

Interested in learning more about Global Gathering Place? Visit their website: <https://globalgatheringplace.com>.

Now is the time

How long is it since you reviewed what you learned in confirmation? Or maybe you never had the opportunity to learn about the Christian faith. Would you just like to have a deeper discussion about what Lutherans believe and teach. Or is it time to formally become a member at St. Paul's? Whatever the reason, NOW is the time.

Pastor Keith will offer Christianity 101 classes, beginning very soon. Please contact him if you would like to join (see page 2).

Reminders

- Please remember that, because we have a number of members with allergies to nuts, any foods brought to church events should be nut-free.
- Also, several have allergies to fragrances. Please consider them when choosing toiletries and whether or not to wear perfumes.
- LWMLC mites and society offerings may be put in the offering plate in an envelope separate from your church offering, mailed to the church or given to society treasurer, Marion Hollinger. Please make any cheques payable to St. Paul's Lutheran Church but mark them clearly as being for LWMLC. Indicate the amount for mites and the amount for society funds.

Classifieds

Something to sell or give away? Need something? Services to offer to fellow members? Try The Spirit Classifieds first. No cost. Send your ads to the editor.

Pastor: Rev. Murray Keith
 Office Secretary: Sandy Harper
 phone: 306-343-9535
 e-mail: stpaulslcc@sasktel.net
 web: www.stpaulslutheran.ca
 Facebook: www.facebook.com/stpaulslutheran
 Instagram: www.instagram.com/stpaulslcc
 Spirit Editor: Marion Hollinger
hollinger@sasktel.net

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STEWARDSHIP

POINTING TO THE ROCK OF AGES

*Not the labour of my hands Can
 fulfill Thy Law's demands;
 Could my zeal no respite know,
 Could my tears forever flow,
 All for sin could not atone;
 Thou must save, and Thou alone.*
 (LSB 761:2)

While the classic hymn “Rock of Ages” shows up in the *Lutheran Service Book* in the “Hope and Comfort” section, it can also teach us a valuable lesson about Christian stewardship. If that surprises you, stay with me on this one.

No Lutheran would ever dispute the fact that our work does not save us. Ephesians 2 makes it truly clear that we are dead in our trespasses and sins and would remain in that state until Christ raises us by grace. There is not a ladder on which we can climb out of the grave that our sins have dug for us. No blood, sweat nor tears

will be able to rescue us. We all know this.

Our works do not save. Christ's work on the cross of Calvary does! He bore human flesh. He carried the burden of our sin to the cross. His body was beaten, bruised and bloodied for us. He has indeed atoned for us! This is more than enough reason for this hymn to be bouncing around in your head all day today!

But our work has a place. The place is in response to what the Father has done for us in Jesus. The Rock of Ages, who is Jesus, becomes the foundation on which our lives of faith are built. The Holy Spirit uses the means of grace to make us God's workmanship that Paul talks about in Ephesians 2:10.

Our workmanship does not display our power or prowess.

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SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

For the 2025-2026 year, we look forward to offering Sunday school on **one Sunday a month**. Bring your friends and join us on **November 2** for Bible lessons and crafts!

The rest of the year's dates will be confirmed soon, and we'll plan to keep Sunday school families in the loop via email.

On Sundays when we don't have Sunday school, we know some of our families have been enjoying the online Sunday school offered by Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in London, Ontario. They plan to offer sessions by Zoom on the third, fourth (and fifth) Sundays of the month. If you are interested in checking out these online lessons, please ask Lisa, Denise or Natalie for contact information.

Stewardship, continued

Like the heavens declare the handiwork of the Creator, the works of a redeemed sinner point others to the salvation that is worked only by Jesus alone. Our work is a response to and reflection of a grace and glory that we ourselves could never accomplish or achieve.

We become stewards of the treasure that is the Gospel. When we faithfully support the work of the Gospel of Jesus Christ with our financial support, we are doing the work which points to the One who alone atones. When we come alongside a struggling sister or brother for whom Christ died and we share the stewardship work of compassion and care, we demonstrate or give bodily form to the treasure of God's love and redemption. When we make it a weekly priority to arrange

our schedule to be in the Lord's House with other stewards of the Gospel to receive again and again the Gospel's precious gift, we are stewards of the Body of Christ in the congregation that points even more people to Jesus.

We cannot do this. Jesus does it through us. We are simply stewards of this precious treasure!

Financially here at St. Paul's, the Board of Stewardship recently reviewed our accounting statements to the end of September. We are showing a year to date deficit of \$18,717 which compares to a deficit at the end of September 2024 of \$20,113. With three months left in the giving year, we have a ways to go to make up the shortfall but given the strong offerings typical in the last few months of the year,

we are confident we can end the year with a smaller deficit that we have currently. For example, our average giving in October, November and December in the last three years has averaged \$74,752 while our estimated expenses in 2025 are expected to total approximately \$70,000 so we have a good start lowering our deficit. In December 2024 alone our giving was just over \$100,000. With God's blessings and your continued support for our mission and ministry programs, we can meet our financial targets and goals. We are stewards of God's precious treasures entrusted to us!

*Blessings and Peace,
Board of Stewardship*

St. Paul's Lutheran Food Bank Drive

Our Food Bank Drive was a tremendous success. Thank you to everyone who participated. We gathered approximately 250 pounds of groceries, a heaping grocery cart full.

We we arrived to drop the gifts off at the Food Bank we had plenty of assistance. It is always a pleasant experience. The staff are friendly and encouraging. Again, thank you.



St. Paul's FAMILY NEWS

WELCOME to new member Danika Osterwalder, the violinist on our music team. Danika works as a registered nurse.

CONGRATULATIONS to Danika and Wyatt Harper on their engagement.

CONGRATULATIONS also to Joel Kitsch on the success he and his Under 18 curling team have been having. Mom Rhonda is doing a great coaching job.

EVANGELISM and PUBLIC RELATIONS

NAMED!

“Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things. Blessed be His glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with His glory! Amen and Amen!” (Psalm 72:18-19).

It wasn't until adulthood that I learned my parents had initially chosen a different name for me. When I was born prematurely, they had decided it was “too big a name for such a little girl” and were prompted to select the name of a young woman my mother had befriended during her working career. Because of my limited vision, I consider it a blessing that my name is less common so that, whenever I hear it called or see it written, I am usually the intended recipient. Above all, I cherish the day I was baptized *“in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”* and my name was *“written in the Lamb’s book of life”* (Matthew 28:19 and Revelation 21:27). Recently, as I wondered about its origin and meaning, a google search revealed, “Verla is thought to mean ‘truth’ or ‘faith’.

Long before our Saviour’s birth, the prophet Isaiah declared, *“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel”* (Isaiah 7:14b). Centuries later, an angel of the Lord appeared to the virgin’s betrothed husband in a dream and said, *“Joseph, son of David, do not*

fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins” (Matthew 1:20b-21). Matthew 1:23b ensures that all readers are aware that Immanuel means *“God with us”* and Matthew 1:24-25 confirms, *“When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called His name Jesus.”*

The apostle Paul’s letter to the Philippians encourages us, *“Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the Name that is above every name, so that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father”* (Philippians 2:5-11).

In the Revelation of Jesus

Christ, the apostle John was directed to write to the Church in Pergamum, *“He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it”* (Revelation 2:17) and to the Church in Philadelphia, *“The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the Name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from My God out of Heaven, and My own new Name”* (Revelation 3:12).

As we serve our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ through His Church on earth, we await that Day when we shall stand before Him to receive all that He has prepared for us. We are truly blessed to sing:
*All hail the pow’r of Jesus’ name!
 Let angels prostrate fall;
 Bring forth the royal diadem
 And crown Him Lord of all.
 Bring forth the royal diadem
 And crown Him Lord of all!*

(LSB #549, stanza 1
 Text and music: public domain)

*Verla Schmirler
 Board of Evangelism
 and Public Relations*

EDUCATION

KIDS CORNER

GROWING HEARTS OF FAITH

One Lord, One faith, One baptism (Ephesians 4:5)



Hi Kids!

November will soon be here when we remember all our fellow Christians who have died and gone to heaven to live with Jesus. Can you remember what the day is called when, in church, we light a candle for each person who died this year and is no longer with us here on earth? If you said, "All Saints Day" you would be right! Watch for this happening on Sunday, November 2.

A week and two days later, on November 11, our whole country recognizes Remembrance Day. On this day, we think about and thank

God for all the people who took part in World War I and World War II to keep our country peaceful and safe. Who else do we know who gave His life for us? He did it for a different reason though...to rescue us from our sin. Jesus did, of course! Let's compare the sacrifices of the veterans (the people who went to war) and Jesus to see how they were the same and different.

"Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends"
(John 15:13).

What is a sacrifice?

A sacrifice means giving up something important, or even yourself, to help others.

World War II veterans' sacrifices

World War II veterans are people who fought in a giant war called World War II, which happened from 1939

to 1945. Many countries, all around the world, were involved. The veterans were soldiers, sailors, nurses, pilots, and helpers who went far from home to protect their country and the people they loved.

- They left their families and homes for a long time.
- They risked being hurt or

even dying to stop things like bullying countries or unfair rulers.

- They helped each other, shared what they had, and sometimes lost friends in battle.
- Some veterans were very young, but they still did brave things for others.

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Sacrifice, continued

Their sacrifice was about fighting for freedom, peace and safety for people they knew and even for strangers.

Jesus' sacrifice on the cross

Jesus made the biggest sacrifice of all by dying on the cross.

- He let Himself be hurt and killed, even though He was innocent, so other people could be forgiven for their mistakes.
- He did it because He loved everyone, not just His friends or people in His country, but the whole world.
- Jesus' sacrifice is about giving people hope, forgiveness, and the only way to be close to God.

His sacrifice was not about fighting a war, but about showing love and forgiveness, even to people who were unkind to Him.

How are their sacrifices alike?

- Both gave up something very important (sometimes even their lives) for others.
- Both were brave and thought about helping others more than just themselves.
- The actions of both changed the world in big ways.

How are their sacrifices different?

- World War II veterans sacrificed to stop fighting and to protect people from harm in a war.
- Jesus sacrificed to bring forgiveness and love, not by fighting, but by letting himself be hurt and choosing not to fight back.
- Veterans' sacrifices helped in a specific time and place. Jesus' sacrifice is for all time and everyone.

What can we learn?

Both stories teach us about being brave, thinking of others, and giving up something for the good of many. Whether it's fighting for freedom or showing love and forgiveness, these sacrifices encourage us to help others in our own lives, even in small ways. When we serve and protect our neighbour, we obey God. We also keep the fifth commandment which tells us we should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbour in his body, but help and support him in every physical need. We can ask God to help us do this, but when we fail, we thank Him for Jesus' sacrifice and ask for forgiveness. Thank you, Jesus!

Denise Timm
for the Board of Christian
Education and Youth