

St. Paul Lutheran  
Church

Annual Report  
May 2009



“In Jesus’ name, Do justice, Love kindness,  
Walk humbly with God”

“Statement of Welcome and Affirmation”

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As a community of the people of God, we are called to minister to all people in our world, which can be a place of alienation and brokenness. Christ calls us to be a family of healing and welcome within our society. We profess our commitment to invite and openly welcome all to hear and experience the word of God, and to share communion and the promise of the risen Christ. Further, we believe that the Holy Spirit can and does work with and through all beings created by God. It is for this purpose that we affirm the following:

- that persons of all races, national and ethnic origins, ages, mental and emotional condition or capacity, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, economic situation and those who suffer from addictions share with others the growth that comes from being unique individuals created by God, and that all stand before God in need of forgiveness;
- that all persons named and unnamed above are welcome within the membership of our congregation upon making the same affirmation of faith that all other members make;
- and that as members, all are expected and encouraged to share in the worship, fellowship and general life of this congregation.

*adopted by Congregational Assembly  
June 7, 1998*

The Rev. Melody Eastman, Senior Pastor  
The Rev. Mark Williamson, Associate Pastor

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*St. Paul is an open, affirming, and inclusive church, welcoming all who seek God.*

# Agenda

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St. Paul Lutheran Church  
Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting  
May 31, 2009  
11:15 A.M.

## Call the meeting to order

### **Opening Prayer**

1. Determine quorum
2. Approve the agenda
3. Approve the January 25, 2009 Congregational Minutes
4. Council nominee presentations (up to three minutes each)
5. Election of Council Members
6. Treasurer's Report
7. Approve Report from the Audit Committee
8. President's presentation of Annual Report
9. Mission narrative-an update
10. Report on the sabbatical
11. Report on plans to consider blessing of same-gender unions in the sanctuary
12. Announce election results

## Closing Prayer

**Adjournment**-Estimated time, 12:15 P.M.

## Report of the Audit Committee

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April 20, 2009

We have audited the records and financial reports of St. Paul Lutheran Church for the year ending December 31, 2008. Our review included the records of the General Fund and the Building on Blessings Fund. These records included, but were not limited to, bank statements, check registers, payroll reports, deposit registers, invoices, contributions, and counting records.

It is our opinion that the statement entitled "Assets and Dedicated Account Balances" properly reports the church's assets and dedicated accounts at year-end, and the Statement of Income and Expenses for 2008 fairly reports income and expenses under the cash basis of accounting.

Andy Voress  
George Bryson  
Tom Hansen

# Parish Statistics

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	Baptized	Confirmed
<b>Membership for year ending December 31, 2007</b>	<b>723</b>	<b>480</b>
<b>Members received during 2008</b>		
By Baptism: children (15 years. & younger)	7	0
By Baptism: adults (16 years. & older)	1	0
By affirmation of faith	10	6
By transfer from ELCA congregation	3	3
By transfer from other Lutheran congregations	4	4
From non-Lutheran congregations	0	0
From other sources/statistical adjustment	2	1
<b>Total members received this year</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Baptized youth confirmed in 2008</b>		<b>6</b>
<b>Total Baptized and Confirmed</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>494</b>
<b>Members removed during 2008</b>		
By death	3	3
By transfer to other ELCA congregations	6	3
By transfer to other Lutheran congregations	3	1
To non-Lutheran congregations	0	0
For other reasons/statistical adjustment	56	38
<b>Total members removed this year</b>	<b><del>68</del></b>	<b><del>45</del></b>
<b>Membership at the end of 2008</b>	<b>682</b>	<b>449</b>
Number of confirmed members who communed	371	
Number of unconfirmed members who communed	169	
Confirmed members who communed and contributed	371	
Average weekly worship attendance	238	

# Congregational Meeting, Minutes, January 25, 2009

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Council President, Gayle Meskimen, called the meeting to order at 12:20 p.m. More than 75 people were in attendance.

Opening Prayer Pr. Eastman opened the meeting with prayer.

Determine a Quorum Ellen Noth moved and John Warbiany seconded that a quorum had been established for the meeting. Motion passed.

Approve Agenda Susan Mullinger moved and Lisa Jackson seconded to approve the agenda with flexibility for the showing of the video, *God's Work Our Hands*. Motion passed.

Approve Minutes Connie Gerardi moved and Tom Toftey seconded to approve the April 6, 2009 Special Call congregational minutes. Motion passed. Connie Gerardi moved and Mark Demich seconded to approve the June 1, 2009 congregational minutes. Motion passed.

Audit Report John Warbiany moved and Mark Demich seconded to accept the 2007 audit report, tabled from June 6, 2008. Motion passed.

## Mission Narrative

Pr. Eastman gave a brief review of the accomplishments from the first phase of the Strategic Plan. She then updated the congregation on the second stage of the Strategic Plan including the recently concluded *Pitching Tent* Initiative. Pr. Eastman reviewed the eight priorities that came from that initiative. John Warbiany moved and Tim Kelly seconded to affirm the eight priorities from the *Pitching Tent* Initiative. Motion passed. (The eight priorities are attached to these minutes.)

Pr. Williamson gave a brief history and purpose for the *Book of Faith* Initiative. Ellen Noth gave a review of the ways St. Paul currently gathers to hear or to study scripture. Dale Van Leewuwen presented some new ideas and technologies to help the congregation to be excited about the *Book of Faith*. Susan Mullinger moved and Barb Warbiany seconded for St. Paul to commit to the *Book of Faith* Initiative. After some discussion the motion passed. Pr. Eastman and Gayle Meskimen signed the *Book of Faith* resolution. (Resolution is attached to these minutes.)

Video, *God's Work Our Hands*, was presented. The video demonstrated how our offering is used outside the walls of St. Paul.

## Living the Faith Priorities

Lent will contain teachings on the *Lord's Prayer* with small groups before or after the services.

There may be a congregational retreat to access the Spiritual Gifts of the members of St. Paul.

Marilyn Sodergren's position, Helping Hands Coordinator, may be expanded to Parish Life Coordinator.

As the Parish Life Coordinator she will continue her current responsibilities and be helping parishioners connect with a ministry.

St. Paul may be developing online communities for people to connect and share their faith.

There may be an all-you-can-eat breakfast served between services this summer.

The youth will be attending the youth gathering, *Jesus, Justice and Jazz*.

Pr. Williamson requested the congregation's attendance at a DuPage United meeting to explore ideas for the use of the old Hubble Middle School building.

Pr. Eastman's Sabbatical Pastor Eastman would like to take a Sabbatical in the summer of 2010 to walk the El Camino de Santiago and then to spend some time writing. She will apply for a grant to cover some expenses. Ellen Noth moved and Maureen Hickey seconded to affirm the planning of Pr. Eastman's Sabbatical. Motion passed.

Election of Nominating Committee The Nominating Committee consists of three elected members. Susan Mullinger is the candidate recommended from the Council. Ellen Noth nominated Teresa Keys for the committee and

she accepted. Ellen Noth nominated Steve Braun and he accepted. Lisa Jackson moved and Maureen Hickey seconded to close the nominations. Motion passed. Darla Moore moved to elect Susan Mullinger, Teresa Keys and Steve Braun to serve on the Nominating Committee. Mark Demich seconded and the motion passed.

Election of Synod Assembly Representatives St. Paul can elect three representatives to the Synod Assembly. Ann Hein nominated Niles Eastman to be a Synod Assembly Representative and he accepted. Ellen Noth nominated Mary Frank to be a representative and she accepted. Tim Kelly was nominated and he accepted. It was moved and seconded to close the nominations. Motion passed. Maureen Hickey moved to elect Niles Eastman, Mary Frank and Tim Kelly to be the Synod Assembly Representatives for 2009. Cherie Schumm seconded and the motion passed.

Treasurer's Report Ann Holmstrom presented the Treasurer's Report. The budget for 2008 was challenging and our income did not cover our expenses. We were able to cover the shortfall with cash reserves. Building on Blessings also had a slight shortfall due to unexpected property expenses. St. Paul's cash position remains good. John Warbiany moved and Dawn Amundsen seconded to accept the Treasurer's report. Motion passed.

### **Presentation of General Operating Budget and Building on Blessings Budget 2009**

Charlie Boone presented the General Operating Budget and the Building on Blessings Budget for 2009. Charlie reviewed the budget process, addressed concerns, and talked about the possibility of a deep recession this year. The Stewardship campaign was also presented. There was a pledged increase in giving among those members who pledged last year and again this year of 5%. The congregation as a whole was asked to approve the 2009 budgets with an understanding of "commitment". "IF" this November it appears that we may fall short of our budget goals, and "IF" you are able to give more, are you committed to increase your giving by 5%-10%? The congregation's "commitment" was offered as an alternative to cutting programs and staff, or lowering our benevolence contribution to the synod and community to below 20% of revenues. There was some discussion on the refocus of the Building on Blessings Budget from a mortgage payment fund to a maintenance and building improvement fund.

Approval of General Operating Budget for 2009 Susan Mullinger moved and John Warbiany seconded to approve a General Operating Budget of \$632,500. Motion passed with two opposed.

Approval of the Building on Blessings Budget for 2009 Connie Geradi moved and Cherie Schumm seconded to approve a Building on Blessings Budget of \$60,000 for 2009. Motion passed with four opposed.

Closing Prayer Pr. Williamson thanked Judy Jenz and committee for providing childcare and lunch for all involved. Pastor closed the meeting with prayer.

Adjournment As there was no further business Cherie Schumm moved to adjourn. Lisa Jackson seconded and the meeting adjourned at 2:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Patty Fess, Council Secretary

# Financial Stewardship Report

St. Paul Lutheran Church  
Financial Stewardship Report  
January 1 - April 30, 2009

## INCOME and EXPENSES

<i>General Fund</i>	<u>Year to Date Budget</u>	<u>2009 Actual</u>	<u>\$ Over/ (Under) Budget</u>	<u>% Over/ (Under) Budget</u>	<u>2008 Actual</u>
<b>Income</b>					
Regular Offerings	\$ 172,875	\$ 152,301	\$ (20,574)	-11.9%	\$ 150,894
Holiday Offerings	4,600	4,783	183	4.0%	4,800
Gain/(Loss) Stock Donations	0	0	0	ERR	(618)
All Other Income	725	191	(534)	-73.7%	791
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 178,200</b>	<b>\$ 157,275</b>	<b>\$ (20,925)</b>	<b>-11.7%</b>	<b>\$ 155,867</b>
<b>Expenses</b>					
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 122,818	\$ 122,409	\$ (409)	-0.3%	118,556
Benevolence	35,153	33,867	(1,286)	-3.7%	32,611
General Property Expenses	18,119	21,308	3,189	17.6%	26,215
Utilities	12,800	13,569	769	6.0%	13,700
All Other Expenses	19,947	18,669	(1,278)	-6.4%	17,137
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 208,837</b>	<b>\$ 209,822</b>	<b>\$ 985</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>208,219</b>
<b>Net Income - General Fund</b>	<b>\$ (30,637)</b>	<b>\$ (52,547)</b>	<b>\$ (21,910)</b>		<b>\$ (52,352)</b>
<b>Building on Blessings</b>					
Income	\$ 16,000	\$ 16,281	\$ 281	1.8%	\$ 14,577
Capital Improvements	10,900	10,900	0		0
<b>Net Income - Bldg. on Blessings</b>	<b>\$ 5,100</b>	<b>\$ 5,381</b>	<b>\$ 281</b>		<b>\$ 14,577</b>

\*\* Mortgage Paid Off as of 1/15/08:

Capital Improvements - \$2,400 for Fellowship Hall Closets; \$8,500 for Sanctuary A/V System

St. Paul Lutheran Church  
 Financial Stewardship Report  
 January 1 - April 30, 2009

**ASSETS and DEDICATED ACCOUNT BALANCES**

	<u>1/1/2009</u>	<u>4/30/2009</u>	<u>\$ Change</u>	<u>% Change</u>	<u>4/30/2008</u>
<b>Financial Assets</b>					
Checking & Savings	\$ 128,842	\$ 82,747	\$ (46,095)	-35.8%	\$ 80,028
Money Market - Community Bank	25,884	25,920	36	0.1%	25,725
Mission Money Market	22,695	22,806	111	0.5%	51,105
<b>Total Cash</b>	<b>\$ 177,421</b>	<b>\$ 131,473</b>	<b>\$ (45,948)</b>	<b>-25.9%</b>	<b>\$ 156,858</b>
ELCA Certificate of Deposit (1-yr)	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 0	0.0%	\$ 25,000
Brokerage	0	0	0	ERR	0
Other	715	815	100	14.0%	204
<b>Total Financial Assets</b>	<b>\$ 203,136</b>	<b>\$ 157,288</b>	<b>\$ (45,848)</b>	<b>-22.6%</b>	<b>\$ 182,062</b>
<b>Dedicated Accounts</b>					
Remembrance	\$ 5,912	\$ 4,616	\$ (1,296)	-21.9%	\$ 16,781
Endowment	20,000	20,000	0	0.0%	20,000
Professional	1,547	3,133	1,586	102.5%	2,463
Property - Gen Oper	23,078	23,078	0	0.0%	23,078
Building on Blessings	30,540	35,921	5,381	17.6%	35,784
In/Out - Benevolence	1,168	1,454	286	24.5%	5,414
Youth Activities	22,322	23,938	1,616	7.2%	20,730
Furnishing Reserve	11,089	11,089	0	0.0%	12,442
Funeral Fellowship	4,926	4,830	(96)	-1.9%	4,926
ELCA College Scholarship	3,500	3,500	0	100.0%	4,500
In/Out - Program	471	(407)	(878)	-186.4%	1,224
<b>Total Dedicated Accounts</b>	<b>\$ 124,553</b>	<b>\$ 131,152</b>	<b>\$ 6,599</b>	<b>5.3%</b>	<b>\$ 147,342</b>
Gen Oper Undedicated	\$ 78,583	\$ 26,136	\$ (52,447)	-66.7%	\$ 34,720
<b>Total Financial Assets</b>	<b>\$ 203,136</b>	<b>\$ 157,288</b>	<b>\$ (45,848)</b>	<b>-22.6%</b>	<b>\$ 182,062</b>

# Report of the Senior Pastor

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In the past year we have begun living into the 8 Priorities identified through the Pitching Tent discernment process, which was the second phase of our Strategic Planning. Through several months of conversations, prayer, and discernment, we agreed on the following:

1. We have a concrete theological witness about Jesus that is vital to the world.  
This is expressed in diversity, openness, flexibility, welcome, and outreach into community.
2. We tolerate differences of opinion and experiences along the faith journey.
3. We want to learn to nurture newcomers well.
4. We want to form intentional Christian Catechumenate.
5. We want to welcome into relationship with God through Jesus Christ people who may not be/feel welcome in other churches or who have no church.
6. We want to be open to the pain of society as a proclamation of our faith in and relationship with Jesus Christ.
7. We want to nurture new members in relationship, discipleship, and spiritual growth.
8. We want people to have a sense of their purpose in the church, so they feel invested in our ministry.

In response to these priorities, we signed the Book of Faith covenant, and have begun strengthening programs for biblical literacy and small group discipling. The Lenten Series on the Lord's Prayer, the coming summer series on Ephesians, and other large/small group events support our goals of teaching Scripture, deepening faith, and nurturing community.

This year an Evangelism Team began forming, focusing on how we communicate the gospel to those outside a church community. This team is looking especially at how we *avoid* the message, "We need you new members to volunteer and contribute to keep our church going!" and *communicate* the message, "God in Christ offers you life that is abundant, and a calling that is vital—and we're here to help you live out both the life and the calling!" I have been encouraging the team to reflect on how we, as a congregation, strengthen our own understanding of living out baptismal calling. We are planning congregational events to help us discover our individual styles, gifts and callings and learn how to prioritize our choices, so we live out the gifts that energize us. We want this self-understanding as part of our congregational culture. Then, when we invite people into ministry with us, we have another piece of the foundation that will support them in their own discipleship, and keep them connected in the community of faith.

Also this year, the position of *Helping Hands Coordinator* has been updated to *Parish Life Coordinator*. Marilyn Sodergren continues to coordinate meals, rides, and other support for people who need that. In addition, she will be meeting with new members to talk with them about their own sense of calling and passion, and help connect them with others in the congregation who share their interests in service and discipleship. Again, this is designed to help us build the deep relationships that support community life and individual growth in faith.

In the challenging economy, many of our members have been faced with significant financial hardship. As a community of believers, we continue to pray for members who are struggling to meet the needs of their families, and respond with compassion. We also know that these realities mean that some members cannot meet the commitment for financial support they had hoped to offer St. Paul. As a congregation, at the January meeting, we committed to going the extra mile to support the ministry we all are part of together; those who are able will be asked, if necessary, to contribute above their commitment so the ministry of St. Paul, and our support of the greater Church, is not diminished. I ask that you continue to pray for one another, and for this ministry. Continue to support this work as you are able, realizing that if you are able to contribute a little extra, that is a blessing to your brother or sister in the pew who wants to see the ministry continue strong in spite of their own financial loss.

I also want to thank you for your affirmation and support for my proposed sabbatical in the summer of 2010. The completed application was mailed (a week before the deadline!), and we will be notified in October whether it has been selected for funding. My sincere thanks to Julie Yurko and Mark Demich, who served as the SPA (Sabbatical Prayer and Accountability) Team and were instrumental in getting the application completed on time.

As always, I must offer my gratitude to our excellent staff: Susan Bosse-Millington, Michelle Harvey, Carl Heine, Kimberly Olson, Cherie Schumm, Sharon Simms, Cara Simpson, Marilyn Sodergren, and Pr. Mark Williamson. Without exception, we have staff which, in a variety of roles, supports this work with skill, commitment, mutual encouragement, respect, humor and joy. We are unusually blessed, and I ask that you continue to pray for the staff and extend your own words of gratitude for all they do.

Finally, my gratitude to the deep faith and commitment of the Church Council, who continues to grow, challenge, pray and lead in such wonderful ways. Gayle Meskimen, Charlie Boone, Patty Fess, Jim Baumgardner, Kevin Dixon, Bob Hein, Ann Holmstrom, Lisa Jackson, Susan Mullinger, Nick Polous, and John Warbany have worked hard to discern God's will, to be faithful and courageous, to be good leaders and faithful stewards, and to honor God and the work of the Church through the people of St. Paul. I am again blessed by such partners in ministry.

Most of all, I am blessed by my partnership with all of you. God is good and faithful to us! You proclaim the gospel in your lives and in your work; please do not forget that your witness is strength and encouragement for the pastors who serve you, and a truly life-giving gift to the world. Thanks be to God!

Pastor Melody Eastman

### **Senior Pastor's Report on the Pastors' Discretionary Fund**

St. Paul Lutheran maintains, separate from the General Operating and Building funds, a Pastors' Discretionary Fund that is used for emergency relief for those who are part of the St. Paul community. This fund is kept in a separate checking account, with the pastors of the congregation as signatories. The account is balanced and overseen by the financial secretary and audited annually by the audit team. Requests for assistance come directly to the pastors; these requests are considered confidential, except for required documentation and records to assure that the funds are being used and accounted for appropriately.

This account is funded solely by the generosity of St. Paul members who contribute specifically to it. None of the funds come from the General Operating fund or from unspecified member contributions. In the past year, St. Paul members have been extremely supportive, being aware of the increased financial burden many in our community have been facing in the current economic climate. I want to express my thanks for the generosity, compassion and trust shown by those who have contributed, and to let you know how the fund has helped those at St. Paul

In the last 12 months, the Pastors' Discretionary Fund has been used for a variety of purposes, including:

- Optical care for an uninsured person who was experiencing severe headaches because their glasses prescription was seriously outdated, and who could not afford either an eye exam or the needed new glasses.
- Early childhood enrichment programs for a family new to this country, whose children required extra support to be able to benefit fully from their regular schooling.
- One-time mortgage assistance to help families stay in their homes until they were able to complete the process for refinancing at an affordable rate.
- One-time coverage of utility bills for a family who experienced job loss and could not meet all the monthly expenses in the period before a new job began.

In almost all cases, those who have been helped by this fund have needed only short-term help, to cover gaps caused by medical crisis or job changes. Those who have been supported by this fund have been able, with your help, to regain balance and move forward.

This ministry is one that is not highly visible, and yet is a clear reflection of this congregation's commitment to loving and caring for one another in times of struggle and challenge. I want to communicate to you the great gratitude of those who have been supported by this ministry, and let you know that you continue to be lifted to God with thanksgiving in their prayers.

## Report of the Associate Pastor

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“The church lives by mission as a fire lives by burning,” said the theologian Emil Brunner—a fine epigraph to the season of Pentecost, and a fitting reminder that as we check our pulse here in this annual report, it’s our connection to God’s mission that makes us vital. This past year I was privileged to be a part of the task force which oversaw the Pitching Tent Discernment Process, not only because it helped me get to know this congregation better, but most importantly because together we clarified our purpose as St. Paul Church. Today the mission priorities that emerged from that process are energizing the whole congregation to walk more boldly in our apostolic calling. Let me mention here just some of the signs of life within my particular areas of leadership: Christian education, youth ministry, and outreach.

In the area of **Christian education**, it has been a joy to see the congregation live into its commitment, formalized in January, to participate in the ELCA’s five-year Book of Faith Initiative. As we strive to become more fluent in the Scriptures (our “mother tongue” as Christians, says Bishop Mark Hanson), we do so out of our conviction that there will be no doing of justice, loving of mercy, or walking humbly with God if we are not individually and corporately fueled by the Word. Consider the powerful example of the Men’s Saturday Morning Breakfast Group which, having gathered every other week to explore (and debate!) what the Bible says about things like resurrection hope, faith and wealth, and “the cost of discipleship,” now finds itself inspired to serve breakfasts during a new fellowship hour between services this summer! Crack open the Book of Faith with a few brothers and sisters and who knows what could happen?

In the area of **youth ministry**, I’m reminded of what a veteran youth minister who mentored me used to always say: *It’s all about relationships!* Numerous adults from the congregation—ROOTS small group leaders and teachers, Making Disciples mentors for 9<sup>th</sup> graders, the guest “saints” who offer their testimonies at Connections—have given their time and their hearts to modeling God’s steadfast love for our young members. In confirmation ministry in particular, I have noticed a remarkable transformation; ROOTS and Making Disciples aren’t so much religion classes kids are required to show up for between 9:45 and 10:45 a.m., but rather places where youth are experiencing Christian community and belonging. (In other words, I suspect a good number of them want to be there!) As a result of these now consistent ministries and the investment of our adults, many of our youth are ablaze for service: serving at PADS and Lent soup suppers, teaching Sunday school, leading Adult Forums and ROOTS, sponsoring awesome concerts (Beki Hemingway and Jonathan Rundman in January), and heading to “servant school” in New Orleans this July for the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering.

In the area of **outreach**, which includes social action and evangelism, our “public church” ministries extending into the community are too many to mention, though I can highlight some significant developments: 1.) Our evangelical outreach to younger adults has been strengthened through the emerging fellowship called Gen X/ Gen Y, a diverse group now gathering regularly to share meals, serve, and seek the kingdom of God; 2.) A campaign called “Leading by Example” was initiated to encourage testing for HIV, including a June 7 screening day at St. Paul in conjunction with a visit from the bishop of Southern Africa; 3.) In our monetary “mission support,” St. Paul continues to model generosity, despite a difficult economic climate, through the 20% of congregational giving we pay forward to synodical and churchwide ministries, and other local and global causes. Finally, I would like to reiterate my hope for greater engagement in justice ministries, particularly through the work of DuPage United (of which we are a founding member) and especially in the area of workforce housing, as the old Hubble school site—nearly across the street from St. Paul—is in the process of redevelopment.

In closing, let me repeat what Kelly Fryer has taught me to say to all those who might doubt that any of the aforementioned, including Bible study, are their “thing.”: *There’s no experience necessary!* In our culture of experts, where personal value derives from specialization and then comparison, let the church witness to a different story. All God asks is a loving heart and an openness to being led by the Spirit. Remember the disciples who walked humbly but attentively with the Risen Jesus on the road to Emmaus—their hearts burned within them.

Pastor Mark Williamson, Associate Pastor

# Report of the Executive Committee

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Greetings in the name of our Risen Lord!

Councils have different flavors. The priorities and activities reflect a particular time and the perceived needs of a particular Council. Council leadership must balance the spiritual and institutional needs of the congregation. Some years, the focus is on institutional concerns. This year reflects more of an emphasis on spiritual matters: spiritual leadership and development. It even seems like a “quiet” sort of year. When you consider what an intentional process for discerning the Spirit’s will for us is really all about, it is not all that quiet.

The following are some highlights from June 2008 to May 2009. Please refer to other board reports for details.

Pitching Tent Process completed, leading to the Eight Meaning Statements. This resulted in stronger Biblical studies and discipling groups. Intentional discernment process furthered the *Strategic Plan*.

*Book of Faith Initiative* implemented at St. Paul Lutheran Church. (Congregation became a *Book of Faith* congregation at the January 2009 Congregational Meeting.)

Audio-Visual upgrade enhances worship services.

Pastor Eastman prepares for sabbatical for June, 2010. Mark Demich and Julie Yurko, congregation members, assist Pastor Eastman in completing the grant application and submitting it to the Lilly Foundation’s *National Clergy Renewal Program* on May 08, 2009.

Leadership/Spiritual Development emphasized. Pastor Eastman led council in leadership and spiritual development at each council meeting. Council held two retreats led by Pastors Eastman and Williamson. Council followed through on some ideas at its meetings.

Challenging budget approved by congregation at its January 2009 meeting, with the understanding that Council would come back to the congregation to ask those who are able to contribute more to meet budget needs if necessary. Council continues to monitor status.

Continuing Resolutions completed. Efforts to place these resolutions in a working notebook on the website for council use have begun. This will contribute to saving paper, helping St. Paul to be more of a “green” congregation.

Blessing of Same-Gender Covenants/Unions: conversation begun. Timeframe for Consideration of Blessing Same-Gender Covenants/Unions presented to council. Education and conversation opportunities planned.

Thank you to outgoing members Kevin Dixon, Jim Baumgardner, and Gayle Meskimen for their diligent, consistent, and ongoing service. Jim and Gayle are eligible to run again for council this month. Thank you also to Ann Holmstrom for serving as treasurer.

Gayle Meskimen  
Council President

Charlie Boone  
Vice President

Patty Fess  
Secretary

Melody Eastman  
Senior Pastor

Mark Williamson  
Associate Pastor

# Report of the Music Director

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St. Paul vocalists and instrumentalists continue to provide leadership in worship and in concerts in our church and community.

- Combining forces with St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church, the Senior Choir presented Faure's Requiem in a moving All Saints Day Concert in November.
- Members of our choir also participated in the Wheaton Sesquicentennial Concert with choirs from numerous churches in our city, Wheaton College and all four Wheaton high schools.
- Building on our relationship with St. Michael's, our adult handbell choir presented anthems at both churches, incorporating their ringers.

Special thanks go out to Michelle Harvey and Susan Bosse-Millington for re-starting St. Paul's Youth Choir by designing a creative approach to rehearsals that combine singing and ringing handbells and chimes. It was wonderful to hear the voices of children and youth in services again.

Worship at St. Paul remains fresh and relevant in part to the role that music plays. Choirs supported the Season of Creation in October with anthems and helping to introduce new hymns. Music added significantly to a reinvented Christmas Eve midnight service as we gathered around the crèche, and again on Good Friday as we approached to reverence the cross.

Our new multimedia system proved its worth throughout the year allowing us to enhance sound with visuals, project words to songs in a darkened sanctuary, and to produce more complex renditions, such as when Jonathan Rundman joined us for worship and a very well-attended community concert.

What sets St. Paul apart is not the size of our choirs (they could and *should* be larger), an amazing acoustical space or even the talents of our musicians. We're unique because we manage to blend what we have. This applies both to the blended nature of the music in worship—trying to maintain a balance between familiar and unfamiliar, easy and challenging a wide range of styles and sounds—but also the people we are: making music together, not just singing or playing notes, but listening as well to the glory of God.

Carl Heine

# Report of the Children's Ministry Coordinator

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## The Vineyard: St. Paul Sunday School

St. Paul's Sunday School program is dedicated to help each child build, strengthen, and live his or her relationship with God. Hands-on interactive activities are the tools we use to guide the children along their own personal faith journeys. By exploring Bible stories from both the Old and New Testaments each year, children are encouraged to discover God and God's character, to understand the message of the gospel and God's plan of salvation, and to internalize what it means to be a Christian and to live each day in relationship with God.

This is our seventh year teaching with the concepts and format of Workshop Rotation Model Sunday School. Workshop rotation continues to be very well received by students, parents, and teachers. The Workshop Rotation Model reorganizes *the way we teach*, not *what we teach*. The concept behind the Workshop Rotation model is that kids utilize their multiple intelligences in a variety of hand-on workshops to study a single lesson over the course of three or four weeks. The extended amount of time delving into each lesson and the active participation in learning helps children develop a lasting memory and understanding of content.

Children between the ages of 3 years and 5<sup>th</sup> grade participate in the *The Vineyard* – our Sunday School program. Enrollment for the 2008/2009 year was 69 children. Weekly attendance averaged 61%. Twenty-nine adult volunteers contributed to the success of our Sunday School program by either “stewarding” a group of children each week or leading a workshop session.

Sunday School lessons follow a six-year scope and sequence, and workshops are developed using curriculum materials from *Cornerstones Publishing*. This past year represented our 6<sup>th</sup> year of this sequence of lessons. We focused on “The Covenant” in 2003/2004, “The Jesus, the Messiah” in 2004/2005, “The Word of God” in 2005/2006, “Quest for Identity” in 2006/2007 and “Test of Faith” in 2007/2008 and “Witness to God's Presence” this past Sunday School year. Lessons for the 2008/0009 Sunday School year included: Creation; Plagues and Passover; Wandering in the Wilderness; The Incarnation; Feeding the 5,000; The Greatest Commandment; The Last Super; Walk to Emmaus; and Paul on the Road.

The 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students participated in an offsite service project this winter by volunteering at the Feed My Starving Children packaging facility in Aurora, IL. Seventeen children and seven adults worked together for two hours packaging a high protein food mix to be distributed to children in Haiti. Together with approximately 20 other volunteers, the group packaged enough food to feed 29 people for one entire year. Each of these meals costs 17 cents to prepare and ship. Our cash offerings for the year of \$827.43 will be forwarded to Feed My Starving Children to supplement these efforts.

In addition to cash offerings, the Sunday School collected over 250 pairs of shoes from the congregation. Those shoes able to be re-used were donated to Peoples Resource Center in Wheaton. Athletic shoes too worn to be re-used were donated to Nike, who will grind them into “Nike Grind” recycled material to build new athletic courts.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Cherie Schumm  
Children's Ministry Coordinator

## Report of the Youth Ministry Administrator

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This year has been full of new challenges and excitement. We have a wonderful group of kids who have worked hard and have had a lot of fun. They went on a canoe trip on the Fox River, cooked a meal for PADS, served at PADS, baked Christmas cookies for shut-ins, taught ROOTS and adult forum, collected money for AMEXTRA, Trick or Canned for food for PRC, participated in a lock-in here at St. Paul and had a barbecue before Roots and Connections began in September.

In ROOTS, the middle school kids have been studying lessons from the Old and New Testaments, as well as from *Luther's Small Catechism*, using Augsburg Fortress' "Here We Stand" confirmation curriculum. We have 28 kids enrolled in the middle school ministry with an average attendance of 59% throughout the year. I would like to thank our large and small group leaders for their time, commitment and presence in the classroom each Sunday. We had 21 adult volunteers involved in our ROOTS class and our mentoring program this year. We continued our very successful mentoring program here at St. Paul for our confirmands. Our confirmand/mentor pairs met in groups of four or six every Sunday morning for thirteen weeks. They followed the "Making Disciples" curriculum which covers topics such as, the Trinity, saints and gifts, and the faith journey. This program was very well received by the members of our church, the families and the confirmands themselves. In June, eleven of our middle school kids will be attending the Living Waters confirmation camp with Pastor Eastman.

Connections, our high school youth ministry, is lead by Niles Eastman. They have had many guest speakers and explored topics relevant to a teenager using videos and the Bible. After each video, the kids discuss and share their ideas and perspectives. Our high school group has been active this year working at PADS, cooking for shut-ins, and teaching and mentoring our ROOTS kids and teaching in adult forum as well. We have thirteen youth who willing be going to the National Youth Gathering in New Orleans this July. Our Youth Board spent time this year working on the vision, purpose and direction that the board should be heading in.

My position includes working with 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders, helping select the curriculum, planning and coordinating events, and being part of the Youth Board, Ed Board and ESGC Board. I am delighted to be working with Cherie Schumm, our Children's Ministry Coordinator. I will continue to be active in the ROOTS classroom for the coming year, and I am responsible for planning all of the service projects, retreats and fellowship activities for kindergarten-12<sup>th</sup> grade.

We are excited about the direction that God is leading us and we look forward to what lies ahead. With Cherie and me working together, we hope to expand all of our programs at every age level and continue to improve on them. Our universal goal is to develop and grow our children's faith in God, and this process has no end. So I ask for your continued support and prayers as we lead our children together into the next year.

Cara Simpson

# Report of the Youth Board

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This past year has been one of exploration and growth for the Youth Board. There were many aspects of this year's youth program the board felt were very positive and present good opportunities for the future, and there were some aspects that we felt should be re-evaluated in the future. Additionally, we found some things that the youth board should focus on addressing for next year.

Throughout the past year, the high school group has been developing a strong sense of community in its core members. Several of the high school youth have made attendance at Connections a high priority and look forward to spending time with their friends. The curriculum, as well, was mostly enjoyed. The youth were especially excited about the continuation of the Lives of the Saints series. Connections even had a previous member now in college return to lead a session! They also are very excited about continuing and developing the high school youth service initiative, Project VPA. Additionally, the church community greatly enjoyed the Connections-led Adult Forum and ROOTS sessions.

The two big issues identified as needing attention in the coming year were attendance and scheduling. Many of the Connections youth were discouraged from attending either because they didn't know who else would be there or they didn't know what the activity for the evening would be. Connections has made some progress in communicating through the use of the Connections Facebook group, but further efforts need to be made. To that end, Connections has explored the idea of establishing its own website, with help from volunteers from the congregation. The youth board is also looking at developing a "buddy system" where our older, more established youth take personal interest in getting to know the younger youth to encourage them to become part of the youth community.

Another area for growth identified by the youth board was in congregational interaction. The Adult Forum and ROOTS sessions were highly praised, but in the past year the majority of the youth interaction with the congregation has been in the form of fundraising. Both the youth and the congregation wish to improve this relationship and are seeking opportunities to do so. We are also looking to increase the youth program's representation in regular correspondence, such as the ACTS newsletter.

The youth program has developed many good plans in the past year, and has begun implementing them. We will continue to develop these plans and refine them, and continue to work to give the youth of St. Paul the best experience possible, combining service, social time, and scripture to encourage our youth to make their faith an integral part of their everyday lives. We would like to close by expressing our sincere and boundless gratitude to the congregation of St. Paul for its continued encouragement and support for the youth programs. Thank you everyone, we'll be seeing you!

This report was prepared by: Brian Baidis, Tyler Bosse, Niles Eastman, Stephen Huff, Lisa Jackson, Eric Modransky, Cara Simpson, Matt Simpson, Mark Williamson, Terry Young

# Report of Worship and Music

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The Worship and Music Board is primarily responsible for various activities related to conducting services throughout the year. The Worship and Music Board meets on the second Sunday of each month (unless otherwise posted) after the last church service except for June and July. Anyone is welcome to attend.

## Current Board Members:

Pat Pape – Chairperson	Cindy Trennert-Lukens – Lectors
Nick Poulos – Council Liaison	Marilyn Sodergren – Ushers
Carl Heine – Music	Connie Gerardi – Acolytes and Crucifers
Barb Deli – Visual Arts	Maureen Hickey – Bread/Host Family
Helen Sinclair – Altar Care	Karen Edwards – Drama/Dance
Beth Baumgardner – Altar Care	Marilyn Dashiell – Greeters/Welcome Center
Mina Kerr – Assisting Ministers	Darla Moore – Publicity
Judi Jenz – Children’s Chapel	Mary Frank – Special Projects
Carolyn Lukens – Deacons	Marlene Muddell – Liturgical Decorator

## Tasks:

- Plan worship services
- Recruit, train and schedule worship assistants
- Follow-up
- Spiritual nurture and prayer

## Annual Highlights:

- Weekly scheduling of over 40 people to assist in worship
- Recruitment and training of new worship assistants
- Installation of new sound and visual system
- Continual use of new visual arts
- Ecumenical Thanksgiving service
- Advent mid-week service
- Lenten mid-week worship
- Blue Christmas worship service
- Centralized scheduling via web calendar
- Increased publicity of worship activities
- Updated brochures placed in racks throughout church
- Lector Training

## Future Projects:

- Create a group of artists to plan future use of art to enhance worship
- Participate in HIV Testing
- Incorporate earth awareness into worship services
- Participate in congregational direction setting

Pat Pape, Chairperson

## Greeters Stats:

We currently have 56 couples or singles involved in greeting on Sunday mornings. We also supplied greeters for the Christmas services. We have ten people serving as hosts for the welcome center, and we need more, particularly for the first service, where we have only four volunteers. I would like to thank everyone who serves as a greeter or welcome center host. They have done a terrific job!

Marilyn Dashiell

# Report of the Operations Board

## Stewardship, Property & Finance

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The property committee has had a busy year supervising various projects, as well as addressing general maintenance and repairs throughout the building. We have been blessed by a large group of congregation members who have volunteered for scheduled work days in the spring and fall. We are thankful for everyone's contribution of time and energy as it has made it possible for St. Paul to keep our property attractive and in good running order. A special thank you is extended to Tim Kelly and Bob Miller, who have spent many hours at St. Paul trouble shooting any problems that develop and as lay members of the Operations Board. Our "GREEN" objective is to make our building facilities and property more beautiful and energy efficient. If you "SPOT" a concern that needs to be addressed, let the property committee or the St. Paul Observation Team know.

Our thanks is extended to the stewardship committee and its chairman Alan Hentschel in promoting financial and volunteer stewardship within St. Paul. . This year's stewardship theme was "Walk with Jesus" which stressed the benefits of spirituality growth through greater participation in programs and activities that are offered within our St Paul community through our individual time, talents and financial gifts. Within the framework of "Walk with Jesus", a balanced budget for fiscal year 2009 was presented to the congregation in January and approved.

The General Operating account budget of \$632,500 is 4.7% higher than 2008's actual of \$604,000. The 2008 budget is a very challenging one given a full staff and a desire to maintain current programs at St. Paul and our benevolence to our synod and community, especially given the uncertainties within the present economy. The congregation as a whole, therefore, was asked to approve our 2009 budgets with an understanding of "commitment". "IF" this November it appears that we may fall short of our budget goals, and "IF" you are able to give more, are you "committed" to increasing your giving by 5% to 10%? The congregation's "commitment" was offered as an alternative to cutting programs and staff, or lowering our benevolence contribution to the synod and community to below 20% of revenues. The congregation voted "YES!".

The congregation at its January meeting also approved a Building on Blessings budget, (B.O.B.), of approximately \$60,000 for 2009. Major improvements in 2008 were primarily associated with the audio / visual system in the sanctuary. Capital improvement projects scheduled for 2009 include kitchen and youth room enhancements, additional closet space, more energy efficient lighting throughout the building, and additional audio/visual enhancements within the sanctuary. These and other minor projects incorporate the "Green" theme with regard to energy conservation. In addition, monies have been allocated for boiler maintenance and repair as well as water seepage prevention. As a reminder, B.O.B. should no longer be viewed as a mortgage reduction fund but as the account to address all future property improvement projects with regard to building facilities management including major maintenance and repair expenses.

The Remembrance Fund expenditures planned for 2009 include a defibrillator and other worship enhancement items.

The Audit Committee of Andy Voress, George Bryson and Tom Hansen conducted their audit review of 2008's financial results with no adverse findings. We are appreciative and thankful of the Audit Committee's time in this important financial function.

We would be remiss if we neglected to mention the fine job that our financial administrator, Kimberly Olsen, and Treasurer, Ann Holmstrom, have continued to do on behalf of St. Paul. Lastly, to the congregation as a whole, the Operations Board offers a sincere "thank you" for your faithful and continued support of your time, talent and resources.

Jim Baumgardner  
Property

Charlie Boone  
Finance

John Warbiany  
Stewardship

## Report of the Nurture Board

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The Nurture Board is pleased to report another year of successful ministries, fellowships and caring. The Helping Hands Ministry, which was begun in 2007, continues to thrive.

The Helping Hands Coordinator's Job Description has been expanded to include more work with new members. Marilyn Sodergren's job is now known as "Parish Life Coordinator." Both her list of volunteers and the people who have been helped continue to grow. Marilyn serves with a tireless dedication that is appreciated by everyone, and she has single-handedly built a network providing care and support within our congregation.

Annual fellowships continue, the highlights being the environmentally friendly Advent Event, our fifth annual Bingo Night, and always growing Cinema at St. Paul. Maureen Hickey gathered an amazing amount of prizes and makes Bingo night bigger and better every year. Cinema at St. Paul averages 40 – 45 people every month including friends from outside of St. Paul.

The Labor of Love quilting group continues to produce over 100 quilts for Lutheran World Relief each year. This year the group expanded their mission and hosted a "Sew What" workshop that produced 36 flannel baby blankets and several dozen baby bibs for the Infant Welfare Society of Chicago. The congregation generously supports this group with large donations a fabric.

The Soup Suppers always attract many diners prior to the Wednesday night Lenten services and we even had council, the youth group as well as the Nurture Board take a turn serving the soup!

Nurture Board members became sponsors for new members twice during this year. Ann and Larry Hill and Diane and Bob Marsh served a delicious dinner while others socialized with new members. Kim Hansen entertained with a lively PowerPoint presentation of many of the caring and fellowship ministries offered at St. Paul.

Caring ministries continue to be strong and flourish. In addition to the Labor of Love Quilters, Homebound Communion, the Book Discussion Group and the Theological Discussion group, our deepest gratitude goes to our Monday night knitting group who has provided hundreds of prayer shawls to both people within and outside of our congregation. They are currently knitting numerous shawls to send to Lutherans Concerned who want to provide a shawl to participants of the ELCA Assembly. The work of these knitters so often stays under the radar but is such an important part of who we are and how we nurture.

Our small group ministry has had a very significant addition with Pastor Williamson's Men's Group. The responding group was so large that almost immediately small group offshoots were formed. A response of this kind is a clear indicator that this was a much needed and much appreciated ministry.

The Board is so thankful for all of the people who care for and nurture each other that go unnoticed and unacknowledged, and for all of the people that have helped throughout the year.

Kim Hansen

## Faith Circle

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Faith Circle has a membership of about 15 women who meet monthly on the second Tuesday to enjoy a brown bag lunch at noon in Fellowship Hall. Time together includes eating, conversation, study of the Word, bidding personal prayers and a program. Our "Sunshine" person prepared greeting cards for members and others in need of cheering up. We schedule regular visits to homebound Faith Circle members. We cordially invite ALL women of St. Paul to join this vibrant, nurturing circle!

Barb Pape

## Report of the Altar Care Committee

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St. Paul Altar Care is made up of approximately twenty-four individuals/couples/families/who serve on an average of three Sundays per quarter.

During the fall, winter and spring months, we prepare the altar for the chapel service and the services in the sanctuary, which, after the 11:00 a.m. service, includes laundering the linens. The same procedure is followed for the various Christmas and Holy Week services. In the summer months we hold two services in the sanctuary (no chapel service)

The Saturday/Sunday schedules are prepared quarterly. Postcard reminders are sent weekly.

Wine, grape juice and oil for the candles, including the sanctuary light candles, baptism candles, and candles for All Saints Day, Good Friday and Christmas Eve services, are ordered as needed. Beth takes care of the sanctuary light in the chancel every 14 days. The large altar cloths are taken to Wheaton Laundry. Linen replacements are ordered as needed. Baptismal hankies are purchased and Charlotte Miller sews little crosses on the hankies. Oil is purchased for baptisms and healing services. Microphone batteries are purchased for the pastors and deacons as needed. Our regular wheat wafers are purchased from Wheaton Religious and the gluten free wafers are ordered from Market Place of the Master in Rockford. The candles on the altar, torch candles and the snuffer lighters are filled on a weekly basis. The Christ candle is filled when needed.

Expressions Florist delivers altar flowers each Saturday, except during Lent. Again, the person or family donating flowers is encouraged to take them following the 10:00 A.M. service during the summer and after the 11:00 A.M. service at all other times of the year. If not taken, flowers are placed in the office and taken down to ESSE.

At Christmas, Easter and Pentecost our worship services are enhanced by special flowering plants donated by members and placed in the chancel area. Beth orders the plants from Village Flower and Garden.

The candlesticks, and candlesnuffers are polished on a regular basis. Paraments are changed as dictated by the liturgical calendar.

Our Wedding Coordinators are Tricia Seagren and Joan Hadraba. They communicate with the couples and families involved and handle the related tasks.

Both Beth and I want to thank the pastors for their patience and support. And again thank you to our very faithful and dedicated volunteers.

Altar Care helps with duties outlined in the "liturgical year, i.e. receiving candles, the cross, and etc., from the deacons and at the end of the Maundy Thursday service, draping the cross in the chapel. This year we would like to thank Mark Demich and Kevin Hengst for removing the sun rise from the cross, draping the cross, then removing the drape and reinstalling the sunrise for Easter Day, and hanging the butterfly in the chancel.

We also help prepare for Advent. We set up the Advent Wreath in the chapel. Also this year we wish to thank Ginny and David Harms for hanging the advent wreath in the sanctuary. And to those who helped decorate for Christmas, Bill Bergman, Jim Baumgardner, Kim and Brian and Brian Hollahan.—thank you. Also we wish to thank Barb Deli for all the beautiful banners she makes and hangs. Altar Care asks Kimberly Olson to remind Dan, our Sexton, to bring down the boxes of material from the attic for the different seasons.

Thank you - submitted by Beth Baumgardner and Helen Sinclair

# Report of the Witness Board

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Our biggest project this year has been our **“Leading by Example”** initiative. Spearheaded by Lois Johnson and Pat Rosborne, this program aims to remove the stigma of being tested for AIDS and has included temple talks, ACTS articles and Adult Forum presentations focused on why everyone should be tested. The culmination of this program is an AIDS testing day on June 7<sup>th</sup> at St. Paul. This has been well-publicized throughout the community and will be open to the public. Many members of St. Paul have already committed to being tested and hopefully many more will take this opportunity to lead by example.

Our **ministry opportunities** have included hosting the PADS site monthly, collecting gifts and paper goods and providing volunteers for the Christmas Store (Outreach Community Center), and sponsoring the CROP walk, an Alternative Gift Market, and Fair Trade sales. ESL tutoring and computer classes continue to be held at St. Paul. We have also collected greeting cards for guests of PADS and the DuPage Home for Veterans, and we have sold bags of groceries that were delivered to the PRC along with the money raised and matched by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans.

We have allocated **your benevolence dollars** for the following local ministries: E.S.S.E., Churches United for Hardship Assistance, Outreach Community Center, P.A.D.S., and ESL classes. Serving DuPage County: Habitat for Humanity, DuPage Pastoral Counseling Center, Peoples Resource Center, J.U.S.T. (county jail ministry) and EXODUS world service. And to Chicago and beyond: St. Elias Christian Church, Bethel Church/Englewood and seminarian scholarship support. Within our church we have provided financial support for two seminary students, Niles Eastman and Jessica (Warbiany) Hahn, and we have also supported Emlyn Eastman and Mike Bertucci on mission trips

We have supported membership in DuPage United and worked with their membership on such issues as affordable housing in DuPage County and leadership at C.O.D. We participated in a meeting with Governor Quinn to make him aware of the most pressing concerns.

The Earth Ministry Team continues to be a catalyst for the congregation in seeking and communicating ways to better care for creation. The team helped St. Paul celebrate the Season of Creation, an alternative season of the church, and also hosted a well-attended walk at Herrick Lake. Working together, the Earth Ministry Team and the Nurture Board replaced the disposable tablecloths used in Fellowship Hall with reusable table covers.

In June of 2008 14 people went to Watseka for a work trip to help flooding victims rebuild, and this year the group will head to Iowa to lend another hand.

Witness is still seeking an official chairperson (although Ann Hein stepped down last year she is still our de-facto leader!). If what you read above moved you to get involved, feel free to contact me or attend a meeting.

Susan Mullinger  
Witness Board Liaison

# Report of the Communication Team

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**Members:** Darla Moore (coordinator), Tecla Reklau, Cathy Godfrey, Fred Amundsen, Mary Cox, Ann Hein, Barb Deli, Pat Pape, Barb Warbiany, Maureen Hickey.

## Accomplishments:

- Set/Held Quarterly Mtgs.  
First Sunday of April, August, October, January, following last service,  
in ESSE Lunchroom, 12:15 pm.
- Worked with Web Committee
- Solicited news articles
- Developed annual budget and report
- Worked with AT&T/DEX for ad in telephone directory/website
- Placed articles with the following:
  - Local Papers:** *The Chicago Tribune, the Daily Herald, the Press, the Sun* (two divisions),  
*The Wheaton Leader* (three divisions), *The Winfield Register, The Press.*
  - The Lutheran Magazine**
  - Radio** – K-Love – (Air 1.com Community Calendar), WTN
  - Websites:** Triblocal, St. Paul
  - The Acts:** “Someone You Should Know” Began column with three  
guest writers (Barb Warbiany, Karen Edwards & Nancy Arnesen).

65 verified published articles between May 2008 and May 2009.  
Three confirmed visitors due to news articles.

Respectfully submitted,  
Darla Moore

# Report of the Web Committee

The committee's mission is to provide information to both the congregation and to those looking for a faith community. It is the aim of the committee to tell the public who we are, and to inform members of the both the latest and the upcoming events at St. Paul. The right side scrolling bar on the home page gives immediate information with links to complete articles and pictures. Newsletters on the web are in PDF format making them easier to read and download.

Tom Hansen, Fred Amundsen, Barb Deli

## Report of the Education Board

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The Education Board is responsible for offering educational opportunities for people of all ages. It starts out with Cradle Roll for infants, using the "Splash" curriculum, (mailing with age appropriate faith-building information and music for infants and their parents.) Holy Communion Instruction is offered to third graders and is described below. Cherie Schumm's report on the Vineyard Sunday school is also on another page. VBS, ROOTS (middle school) and Connections (High School) continue our Christian Education program. We are blessed with the help of Cherie Schumm and Cara Simpson, who make these programs run smoothly, and the many volunteers who have consistently stepped up to the plate. Thank you!

A report on the Adult Forum is below. Our thanks goes to Ellen Noth for being the planner-organizer and for the church members who have been presenters. Adults also have an opportunity for further education in the monthly Women's Bible study as well as the bi-weekly Men's Breakfast Group. Pat Pape has led several six week Bible studies throughout the year including "Who is My Neighbor? The stories of Ruth and Jonah."

Education board members, along with several others, participated in organizing the *Book of Faith* initiative. We met November through January for Bible study and to plan implementation of this church-wide ELCA initiative at St. Paul. As a result:

- Over 80 people participated in the *Book of Faith* introductory course.
- Many participated in the *Book of Faith Lenten Journey*.
- The Lutheran Study Bible was ordered and distributed.
- A St. Paul Book of Faith Group page on the *Book of Faith* Social Networking site was created to encourage online conversations related to the Bible.
- Training for lectors was offered.
- A "Scripture Tree" has been commissioned to celebrate and recognize Bible reading in the congregation.

What's next for the *Book of Faith* initiative? A six-week summer series on Paul's letter to the Ephesians will meet Wednesday evenings this summer. A Wednesday night program for the fall is still in the planning stages.

If you are interested in participating on the Education Board we would love to have you join us. For more information, contact Bob Hein or Pastor Williamson.

Bob Hein, Council liaison for Education Board

## Report of Adult Forum

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The mission of Adult Forum is to provide learning opportunities about the Bible and our Christian faith, to foster understanding of other Christian denominations and other religions, to raise awareness of and increase participation in our ministry and witness to the community and the world. We also present programs to help us become informed on ethical issues and relate them to our Christian faith.

From time to time we invite professors from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago to lead our discussions. We are fortunate to have this resource in our area. We are also privileged to have leaders within our congregation and community who generously give of their time to adult education.

With the commitment of our St. Paul congregation to the Book of Faith Initiative, there will be an emphasis on Bible study for the 9009-2010 season.

Forum has met every Sunday during the education hour for many years, and has always enjoyed an excellent response from church members. Attendance ranges from 25 to 40 each week. Meetings are held in the ESSE room on the lower level.

We encourage your attendance. Schedules are in the Sunday bulletins, the ACTS and on the St. Paul Web Page. Suggestions for future topics and/or speakers are welcome at any time.

Ellen Noth, Coordinator

## Holy Communion Instruction for 3<sup>rd</sup> Graders

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This year at St. Paul, thirteen 3<sup>rd</sup> graders and their families participated in a four-week course of exploration and study of the gift of the Lord's Supper and Christ's presence at the table. The classes were led by Pastor Williamson, Eleanore Richards, and Cherie Schumm. The first week was dedicated to a parent's meeting led by Pastor Williamson and Eleanore Richards. During this meeting, Pastor Williamson showed a video from the Lutheran Course and led a discussion using the booklet "What every Lutheran should know: About the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper."

The week two class took the place of the regular Sunday school class for the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders. During week two, Eleanore Richards led the children in play-acting the story of the Prodigal Son as a means of understanding grace and the importance of celebrating Holy Communion every Sunday.

The third week of the program was a two-hour afternoon session for the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders and their families. Child-care was provided for younger siblings. Cherie Schumm led a discussion on grace and on the sacraments. With the assistance of several volunteers, Pastor Williamson then reprised his role as "Guilt" in the skit "Guilt-free." Next, the large group split up for bible study on the concepts of covenant and "real presence." Each small group created a poster to share the information they had learned. Lastly, Pastor Williamson took the children up to the sanctuary and led a discussion on preparation for communion.

Over the course of the four weeks each child had the opportunity to create an individual banner expressing what Holy Communion means to them. There was also a written home-work assignment using Daniel Erlander's book, *A Place for You*.

Holy Communion instruction concluded on Holy Communion Sunday, with each 3<sup>rd</sup> grader taking an active role in the 11 am service, either as a lector, communion host, or greeter. The children and their families were blessed during the service, and each child communed with his family.

At the end of the service, each child was presented with a cross-stitched plaque, which recognizes their birth date, baptismal date, and the date of their completion of Holy Communion instruction.

Eleanor Richards

# Timeline for Consideration of Blessing of Same-Gender Covenants/Unions

05/18/2009

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May 31, 2009 Congregational Meeting: Report on plans to consider blessing of same-gender unions in the sanctuary

June, 2009: Pastor Eastman will send a letter to congregation outlining the history of Church-wide and Synod consideration, resolutions to date, the Bishop's view, the role of pastoral care, and the role of conscience.\*

September 20, 2009: Adult Forum led by Pastor Eastman.

October 25, 2009: Coffee with Council

November 16, 2009: Council meeting: A motion indicating the Council's intended recommendation to the congregation. This will help guide roundtable discussions.

November 22, 2009: Roundtable discussion at 12:30 PM

December 21, 2009: Formal motion from Council for the January, 2010 Congregational Meeting

January, 2010: Motion voted on at Congregational Meeting

\*[For information on the ELCA process](#): The May 2009 issue of *The Lutheran* has an excellent summary of the process around adopting the social statement, "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust" and implementing resolutions. The Social Statement does not include recommendations for any specific policies or actions, but acknowledges the divergence of opinion across the ELCA. You can read the proposed statement in its entirety at <http://www.elca.org/What-We-believe/Social-Issues/Social-Statements-in-Process/JTF-Human-Sexuality/Proposed-Social-Statement.aspx>. Click on the link in the gray box on the right that says, Download Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust.



