



The Messenger

The Newsletter of First Saint Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Happy New Year!

Let everyone submit to the governing authorities, since there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are instituted by God. (Romans 13:1)

Back in mid-November, I was encouraged when viewing a Town Hall meeting on CNN. Host Jake Tappert moderated the proceedings in which former Vice President Mike Pence fielded questions from a diverse audience. What impressed me was the atmosphere. It was not the tense “gotcha” mentality that has marked political discourse as of late, where it’s all about scoring points against your opponent. Instead, the dialogue was marked by substance in delving into complex issues, and my biggest takeaway was Mike Pence’s stress of a need to return to civility in American politics.

Civility. Isn’t that a novel term these days? Doesn’t it have a nice ring to it versus the increasing volume and harshness which characterize the rhetoric all too often prevalent in our national discourse? Wouldn’t that make an excellent New Year’s Resolution – to be more civil? In fact, St. Paul’s admonition from the book of Romans urges us to realize that civility begins with the agents at the top. We are to respect the governing authorities which God has established. Indeed, our Lord Jesus modeled respect in His dealings with the Jewish leader Nicodemus, the Roman Centurion, and even the oppressive Roman government as He declared: “Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and to God the things that are God’s.” In short, Jesus honored the dignity of every person, whether He agreed with them or not. He would not found His Kingdom on the basis of race, class, or political affiliation. Anyone made in the image of God was welcome to join His Kingdom.

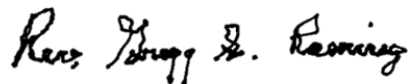
Civility and respect – they form a good model for our behavior toward those who are in authority. Yet this does not mean that we roll over to them. Care must be taken not to slavishly or sheepishly obey the authorities when it comes to the infringement of our human rights. Do we have rights? Genesis 1:26-27 tells us that God made all human beings “in His image.” Because of this, every human life is sacred and inviolable, and every person has a dignity and worth which must be respected. It’s the basis for our Constitution’s Bill of Rights, and it is in this area where the rubber meets the road with issues like the right to life for the unborn child, or in the area of freedom to assemble for worship. How is it that Covid restrictions allowed liquor stores and strip clubs to remain open but not churches? Don’t such mandates cross over the line as when used for increased government surveillance and the possible curtailing of human freedoms (as in China)? So often freedom is put into jeopardy through the excuse of maintaining security. Is there

not a place for civil disobedience to curtail government infringements? Acts 5:29 finds St. Peter speaking out against overreach from the Jewish rulers.

Yes, we should respect and pray for leaders, but also never forget that they are limited human beings subject to appetites, pressures, and irrationality. Thus, we should not be shocked or disillusioned if it's revealed they have feet of clay. Nor should we be blasé. How important to maintain a counterpoise to avoid looking on them as more-than-God with adulation versus veering to the other extreme of bitter cynicism.

Truly, the Biblical view is uniquely balanced and it is marked by virtue as our Lord Jesus provides us with the model of respect for the dignity of every person. God grant us the grace of civility rather than joining in on the politics of polarization. May we show love for the woman who has just emerged from the abortion clinic (and, yes, even her doctor). Jesus' love cuts across distinctions and dispenses grace. From Him we learn that whatever activism we get involved in, it must not drive out love, humility, or civility. Pray for His wisdom as you navigate through 2023.

Blessings on your New Year,



Pastor Gregg

Vacancy Pastor

Report & Request from the Call Committee

As of December, the Call Committee had completed preliminary interviews with all pastoral candidates who were deemed to most closely fit our congregational profile and possess the set of skills the congregation has identified as important.

The Call Committee has now begun scheduling in-person meetings with these candidates, inviting the candidates and their spouses to Chicago. After completing these meetings, the Call Committee will be ready to submit its recommendation to the Church Council. After clearing the Church Council, the Call Committee will present a recommendation to the Voters' Assembly. Ultimately, the Voters' Assembly will vote to decide which pastoral candidate to call as FSP's full-time pastor.

To help defray the costs of flying candidates and their spouses to Chicago, the Call Committee is seeking a member or members willing to donate their frequent-flyer miles. If you are willing to do so, please speak to one of the members of the Call Committee or contact Lydia in the church office. Your donation will be greatly appreciated.

The Call Committee has six members: Howard Ansorge (Chair), April Szymanski, Laurie Bart, Jen Masengarb, Mike Cacicio, and David Rogner.

Wednesday Noon Bible Study: Never Beyond Hope

The Epiphany season is all about the increased manifestation of the light of Christ into the world. A great aspect of that light is the virtue of hope — trusting with expectation for a desired outcome.

It's been said that hope is in decreasing supply within our secular culture. So come and be strengthened as we study men and women in the Bible who have discovered that with God all things are possible.

We meet in the lounge or you can join us on Zoom.

- Pastor Gregg



Lighting the Advent Candles, 12.04.22



Pastor Gregg leading worship after the Children's Presentation, 12.18.22



Christmas Sing-Along after the service, 12.18.22



Christmas Concert

Many thanks to everyone who helped make the Christmas concert a success.

That includes not just the vocal and instrumental musicians, but the efforts of so many to make sure that all the arrangements were set. We appreciate that many people attended the concert, and we are thankful for the many financial contributions, without which the concert would not be possible.



We have been very busy at Sunday School!

10/30: The lesson was on **Martin Luther** (and a little tangent on Martin Luther King Jr.). We learned about the Reformation and made some Luther Rose Art!

11/6: The lesson was **“Children of God”** – what does it mean to be a Child of God? And the glorious truth that we are all Children of God! We put our names on a cross and drew or wrote three things that we are grateful for. Please visit our Sunday School room to see this colorful mobile which serves as a constant reminder!

11/13: The lesson was **“Trust in God”**. From Luke 21.5-19 we gleaned that temples are temporary, but God is eternal and his love lasts forever! We also learned about Apostle Paul’s missionary work and colored maps of Paul’s journeys. We now know who the Thessalonians were!

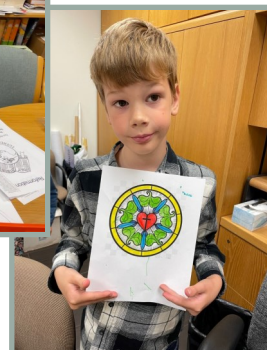
And finally, our FSP Sunday School ended 2022 on a wonderful high note – our **Children’s Presentation on Sunday, December 18th!** I can’t express how proud I am of the children! Jacob, Gabriel, Samantha, Oswin, Louisa, and Lila were all so composed and conveyed the story of the Birth of Jesus so wonderfully! Five perfect Angels...and a Star!

I am so very thankful for everyone’s hard work, which enabled us to put on a short nativity play in very little time. First to thank is Mike Cacicio, who tirelessly helped me find and unpack all the old Sunday School art supplies and Nativity costumes. Next, thanks to our amazing Sunday School parents who helped the children practice their parts at home and graciously assisted in two of our rehearsals/run-throughs! For the bells accompaniment to *Away in a Manger*, we have Laurie Bart to thank! And, of course, John Bart for his great acting role of “Shepherd #1” assisted in his characterization by Holly Bart in the appropriate role of “lone dancing, wandering sheep”! Thank you to Steve Wente for accompanying us and for support with the order of Service.

All in all, a great team effort! Thank you to the congregation for all your kind words and positive feedback! For those of you who missed the Presentation, we are hoping to present a short Easter message this spring.

As always, please feel free to contact me in person or leave a note in my cubby if you would like to help in any way! Blessings to all!

Betsy Pennington Taylor



Schedule of Events

- **Jan. 10:** Board of Worship & Music meeting at 7:15pm
- **Jan. 14:** Foot Clinic at 10am
- **Jan. 18:** Church Council Meeting at 7pm
- **Jan. 21:** Choir Rehearsal from 9:30 - 11am
- **Jan. 22:** Congregational Meeting at 11am after the service

January 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 New Year's Day	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 Board of Worship & Music	11	12	13	14 Foot Clinic
15	16 Martin Luther King Jr. Day	17	18 Church Council	19	20	21 Choir Rehearsal
22 Congregational Meeting	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	1	2	3	4 Choir Rehearsal
5	6	7	8	9	10	11 Foot Clinic

Organ Anniversary

Did you know that the organ at First Saint Paul's is now fifty years old?

It was installed in the fall of 1972, and dedicated by the renowned Lutheran organist Paul Manz in a recital program on February 4, 1973. The organ was built by the Schlicker Organ Company of Buffalo, NY, one of the leading organ builders at that time.

While the organ is similar to other small instruments, it was designed and built for the sanctuary at First Saint Paul's. Dr. Paul Bunjes of Concordia (then Teachers College) was the consultant and "designer" of the organ.

Look for information in the coming weeks about the recognition of this significant anniversary!

Composer Anniversary

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of composer Richard Hillert (1923–2010), who was professor of music at Concordia-Chicago for many years. Hillert's name is well-known throughout the United States and beyond, primarily for his setting of the liturgy that we call Divine Service 1, from which comes "This is the feast of victory for our God."

Hillert wrote many hymns and choral anthems; two of those anthems were sung at the recent Christmas concert. For the 150th anniversary of First Saint Paul's in 1996, Hillert was commissioned to write a suite of movements for strings subtitled appropriately "Sesquicentennial on LaSalle."

During this year we will have opportunity to hear other selections from Hillert's substantial catalog of works.

Praying Through the Church

BECAUSE WE ARE A CHURCH FAMILY, a community of faith, we have a concern for one another—a concern that is expressed on Sunday mornings as we pray for members of our church family by name.

WE PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER, remembering the words of St. Paul to the Apostle to Timothy, “I urge then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone...” and the promise of our Lord Jesus Christ, “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.”

WE ALSO ENCOURAGE members and friends of the congregation to make their prayer requests, births, illnesses, deaths, anniversaries, and special occasions for intercession or thanksgiving known to the pastor, preferably before the Sunday morning services, but in cases of emergency, right up to the service time.

THE FOLLOWING FRIENDS & MEMBERS of our church family will be remembered in the services of worship during the month of January.

January 1

Jim Whitehead || Mark Wimer

Peter & Victoria Wirtala || Nolan Wolf

January 8

Susan Aarup || Howard & Nancy Ansorge

Richard Allen & Jill Chapman, Lydia and Henry

January 15

Eric Ause || Judy Barnes || Lisa & Wally Barrett

John & Laurie Bart, Lila and Holly || Buff Bethlen

January 22

Elizabeth Bewley || Stella Black || Rachel Bogardus

Tom & Jen Boisseau || Laurene Boock

John & Charlotte Brandenburg

January 29

Maris & Robert Bosworth, Claire || Trevor Braaten

Tanner & Samantha Brawley, Brooke and Madison

Karen Bressler || Howard Bressler.

Official Acts 2023

Baptisms

Jan 8: Brady Gene Dernulc, son of Timothy & Victoria

Weddings

Jan 7: Jack Armstrong & Annalise Harstine, married at First Saint Paul's by Pastor Foster Toft

Our Parish at a Glance Vital Statistics for 2022

Membership

Members Received in 2022	3
by Baptism (child)	1
by Baptism (adult)	1
by Affirmation of Faith	-
by Transfer	1
by Confirmation	-
Members Removed in 2022	23
by Death	1
by Transfer to LCMS	5
release to other Lutheran	3
moved, no transfer	14
Average Sunday Worship Attendance	75

Members Who Died in 2022

Maurice Tanter

✠ Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. ✠

✠ They sing before the throne of God ✠

**FIRST SAINT PAUL'S
EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH**

*First Saint Paul's, established in 1846,
is the oldest Lutheran Church in Chicago.
The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod was
founded when historic meetings were held
here in 1847.*

**1301 N. LASALLE DRIVE
CHICAGO, IL 60610
312.642.7172
www.fspauls.org**



CHURCH STAFF

The Rev. Gregg Ramirez
Vacancy Pastor
gramirez@fspauls.org

Steven Went
Cantor
swente@fspauls.org

Margaret Danilovich
Associate Cantor
mdanilovich@fspauls.org

Lydia H. Stucki
Church Secretary
office@fspauls.org

Cindy Goers
Financial Advisor
finance@fspauls.org

SERVICES OF WORSHIP

Sundays

Divine Service at 9:30am in person
and livestreamed
Adult Bible Class at 11am
Sunday School (ages 4-10) at 11am

HOLY COMMUNION

Celebrated every Sunday morning

ELECTED CHURCH OFFICERS

* Voting member of Church Council

Chairman*

Gavin Morgan

Vice Chairman*

Susan Rosborough

Recording Secretary

Robin Tangren

Assistant Recording Secretary

Jody Lucey

Treasurer*

Bryan Schneider

Assistant Treasurer

Cheryl Kobetsky

Financial Secretary

Pam Kaji

Assistant Financial Secretary

Arlene Dahm

Membership Secretary

Gretchen Randall

Chair, Board of Christian Education*

Betsy Pennington Taylor

Chair, Board of Stewardship*

Asa Carter

**Chair, Board of Evangelism &
Outreach***

Tom Randall

Chair, Board of Social Ministry*

Vacant

Chair, Board of Worship & Music*

Janette Ramirez

Chair, Board of Deacons*

Buff Bethlen

Board of Elders

Howard Ansonge
Doug Harkness
Christine Lutze
Susan Morgan
David Rogner, Chair*

Board of Trustees

Tom Boisseau
Michael Cacicio, Chair*
Dwight Deppen
Alex Griebel
Robert Miller

Deacons

Buff Bethlen, Chair*
Diane Krizan
Liz Lassiter
April Szymanski
Allison Warren

Nominating Committee

Nancy Ansonge
Amy Harkness
John Mason
Betsy Pennington Taylor
Mike Schubert, Chair

**COMMITTEE/GROUPS
CHAIRS/CONTACTS**

Altar Guild

Sandy Lawrence

Communion Assistant Coordinator

Janette Ramirez

Community Meals

Mike Cacicio

Concordia Cemetery

John Stodden

Human Resources Committee

Susan Rosborough

Liturgical Arts

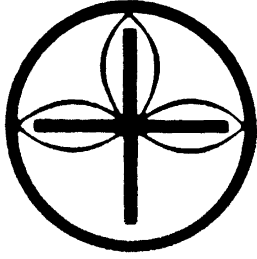
Darlene Fahrenkrog

Lutheran Home

Susan Rosborough

Wunder's Cemetery

Dwight Deppen



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“We welcome you to be at home among us.”