



The Messenger

The Newsletter of First Saint Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church

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As a youth, were you one of the popular kids? I wasn't, but I yearned to be. However, due to my strict upbringing, I was more introverted and lacking in self-confidence. This made it a challenge for me on the dating scene for many years. I'd clam up until a friend of mine taught me the value of asking questions. It was a game-changer. Asking questions brought me out of my clamshell and it also worked to bring the other person out of his or her self-imposed shell. Indeed, it's something that I've found extremely beneficial for my work of ministry through the years. Moreover, I discovered that the key to asking good questions is curiosity. Curiosity can make all the difference in the world in facilitating meaningful conversations.

Back in 2009, researchers at the California Institute of Technology recorded brain activity using MRIs while subjects considered a variety of questions. After reading each question, the subjects would silently guess the answer and then rate how curious they were to know the correct answer. The study showed that a high level of curiosity correlated directly with a high level of brain activity. The researchers concluded that curiosity plays a critical role in motivating learning and discovery.

Shades of Curious George! Our amazing omniscient God has shaped us with a sense of wonder and an appetite to discover more about His creation. He has hard-wired us to be naturally curious – to want to learn new things. This curiosity compels us to ask questions to investigate, to seek to understand.

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of others. In our relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus. (Philippians 2.3-5)

Have you ever thought how this understanding could be a real boost to your Christian walk as a committed believer? Curiosity, as it relates to relationships, is the humble and sincere interest to know and care more about another person and his or her thoughts. Moreover, the way our curiosity is best demonstrated is through asking good questions. Asking good questions from genuine interest builds connection. Throughout Scripture, we discover God asking people questions. It began with Adam and Eve and it was part of carrying out His plan to restore people into full connection and relationship with Him.

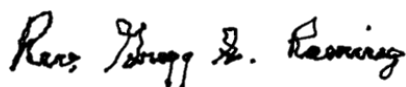
Do you see the great opportunity for us in following God's example? Haven't we all heard this exhortation from the pulpit? "You people need to tell others about Jesus." Yet all too often this is easier said than done. We don't know where to start, but could this be the great open door? Our questions to those alienated from

God can be the bridge that moves us from silently noticing to actively engaging with them. It's what St. Paul was encouraging in the Philippians 2 passage (above) that we consider others and their interests.

May you take the time to learn how to more effectively express your curiosity to others. It can begin with casual phrases like: "I couldn't help noticing ...", "I'm wondering ...", or "I'm curious..." Your simple, humble interest is appealing to people; they will often be drawn to it. As you allow your Spirit-led curiosity to enter into conversations, you will find that the way becomes open to ask more profound questions. Your effort in activating curiosity in others can lead them to pursue life-changing answers for themselves.

So, note well! We are hard-wired by our awesome Creator to be naturally interested in learning more about people and His creation. Our curiosity and question-asking can be cultivated through practice and intentionality. Pay no attention to the adage "curiosity killed the cat." Through meaningful questions we demonstrate the Spirit of Christ in honestly seeking to understand, know, and love others. So ask away!

Epiphany blessings,



Pastor Gregg
Vacancy Pastor

We Need Your Hymn Recommendations for Lent!

This year, as part of our Lenten mid-week devotions, we will be recording a hymn meditation video each week. Please submit your favorite or meaningful hymn for these devotions by putting your suggestion in the box on the back brick wall close to the organ.

You can consider hymns not just from Lent or Holy Week, but any hymn appropriate to the general themes of Lent, such as discipleship (sanctification), trust, hope and comfort, hymns of the Redeemer. The only hymns that we would like avoid are seasonal hymns: Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, Pentecost, or hymns that have "Alleluia" in them.

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.

Wednesday Bible study will not be meeting during Pastor Gregg's absence. Please join us next on March 15, 2023 to continue our study!

Organ Anniversary

Our Schlicker organ was installed in the fall of 1972, and dedicated in a recital program by the renowned Lutheran organist Paul Manz on February 4, 1973. We will commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the organ in a brief program on **Sunday, March 12 at 11:00 am**, during the adult Bible class time.

How does the organ work? How many pipes are there in the organ? What is the biggest/smallest pipe? What kind of sounds can the organ make?

We'll answer these questions and more on March 12 after the service!

Have You Been Welcomed by a Deacon?

If on Sunday morning, when you enter First Saint Paul's, you are greeted with a friendly smile and a "Good Morning" or "Welcome", you have met one of the Deacons.

Their warmth and friendliness are real and whatever enjoyment they are imparting to you, they are receiving as much or more in return. Here are some of their statements:

Allison Warren writes:

Being a Deacon has allowed me to get to know the congregation and have fun while doing it.

And from **April Szymanski**:

Being a Deacon at FSP has given me the opportunity to meet and connect with other member of FSP. It has been a pleasure being able to greet people in person again.

Liz Lassiter:

I really enjoy welcoming people to worship, saying hi. I also love that I get to do it with my family. It's so nice to get us all together and have Gavin and Louisa (her small children) entertain our members and visitors. It puts a smile on their faces and mine.

And for me, serving as a Deacon helps remind me that my main purpose is to serve others. We see that everything is set up for the service, that all of the participants in the service have arrived, and if not, we find substitutes for those that haven't. We are available to assist the Pastor in whatever way is needed.

As greeters, serving others may take the form of imparting information about our church or services, finding a suitable person to sit with a visitor who would rather not sit alone, directing a member or visitor to the proper person who can answer a question that we cannot, and once, it was my pleasure to get ice for a teething baby. While your focus is on welcoming and serving others and concentrating on their needs, you get the focus off yourself and the worries and/or concerns you may have in your own life disappear. The opportunity to serve is a great gift and one that remains with us as we interact with others wherever we go.

Buff Bethlen

Chair, Deacons

Social Ministry at First Saint Paul's

We are in the process of meeting with several organizations to incorporate their offerings for the guests we serve directly and through our existing service partners, such as Chicago Help Initiative (CHI) and Lutheran Church Charities.

Food-To-Donate: This national organization represents various restaurant chains and coordinates their food donations. Beginning in February, we will receive donations from local Insomnia Cookies stores, frozen burger patties and apple pies from McDonald's, and chicken from Chick-fil-A. Other chains will be added over time.

Instacart: National grocery shopping and delivery company. They have food donation "wish list" program. We would like to use their program for our homebound members and for augmenting meal needs in general.

River City Church, Humbolt Park: They operate an apprenticeship program to teach job skills in the trades and to help their trainees find jobs. The apprenticeship program is pertinent for a subset of our community meals guests. We will be the conduit to this and other of their programs as appropriate.

Christ The King Lutheran Church is now a periodic recipient of bagged meals collected at FSP's on Wednesdays and delivered by CHI drivers.

Renew Chicago raises volunteer and financial support to benefit those in need within the 77 neighborhoods of Chicago. Doug Fraser of CHI and Mike Cacicio met with Renew Chicago's director and are now in the process of integrating our respective services.

Finally, a service partnership meeting with **Covenant House** is forthcoming. They provide shelter for homeless youth. We hope to take part in their ministry.

ONGOING OPERATIONS

Our Saturday meals program and monthly Foot Clinic continue to serve our guests. Two to three Saturdays a month we offer various social work services (such as acquiring photo identification cards) and nurse practitioner services via on-site Chicago Help Initiative staff members.

We continue to receive and redistribute between 250 and 400 bagged meals every Wednesday morning.

We receive, organize and distribute hundreds of pairs of gently used shoes each month, along with a healthy amount of coats, hats, gloves, scarfs, socks, and toiletries.

FSP's hosts between 60-100 AA members across two meetings every Sunday. The need for more meeting times/days exists. Planning to meet this demand is in progress.

Interested in Volunteering?

Contact the church office at office@fspauls.org or reach out to Mike Cacicio for more information (mike.cacicio@rcn.com). We'd love to have you join us in serving God's people!

Lenten Daily Devotions

Several different Lenten daily devotion booklets will be available, including one written by Reed Lessing. Look for them in the narthex beginning on Ash Wednesday and help yourself.

Schedule of Events

- **Feb. 4:** Choir Rehearsal from 9:30 - 11am
- **Feb. 11:** Foot Clinic at 10am
- **Feb. 12:** Congregational Meeting at 11am after the service
- **Feb. 18:** Choir Rehearsal from 9:30 - 11am
- **Feb. 19:** Pancake Breakfast following the service
- **Feb. 22:** Ash Wednesday service at 7pm
- **Feb. 28:** Election Day—FSP is a polling place 5am-9pm

February 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29	30	31	1	2	3	4 Choir Rehearsal
5	6	7	8	9	10	11 Foot Clinic
12 Congregational Meeting	13	14	15	16	17	18 Choir Rehearsal
19 Pancake Breakfast	20	21	22 Ash Wednesday	23	24	25
26	27	28 Election Day	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11



Sunday School Recap!

We have been studying the life of Jesus Christ from Birth to Baptism. We discussed distances between journeys in the New Testament, the time it probably took, clothes, food and traveling conditions.

In addition, we celebrated Mike’s Birthday, thanked him for all he does for us at FSP, and made him some colorful cards!

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 February.

February 5

Paul Brouwer || Cindy Bruno || Marilyn Bunck || Michael Burkholder & Lorinda Scrogam
Olga Pierce-Busse || Mike Cacicio

February 12

Asa Carter || Peggy & Joe Cassidy || Peter & Joyce Chan, Patrick and Max || Andrew Chaveriat
John & Dorothea Chaveriat || Clara & Kevin Chun

February 19

Bill Clark || Nick Covello, Hayden and Nicholas || Arlene Dahm || Andy & Susan Danilovich
Michael & Margaret Danilovich, Ava || Jonathan Dedmon || Karoline DeJarnette || Glenn Dempsey

February 26

Dwight Deppen || Christine & Jon DeVries || Neil & Marilyn Dungan
Richard Eisenhardt || Paul & Darlene Fahrenkrog

APPROACHING LENT 2023

“Return to the Lord, your God”

The season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday (February 22), a day of repentance and reflection. Lent lasts forty days (not counting Sundays), reflecting the forty days of Jesus’s time in the wilderness after his baptism and the forty years of Israel’s wandering in the wilderness.

We will have a service of imposition of ashes and holy communion on Ash Wednesday at 7:00 pm. In Holy Week, the services on Maundy Thursday (April 6) and Good Friday (April 7) will also be at 7:00 pm. There will be no mid-week evening services this year. However, we will have mid-week Lenten meditations that will be sent out each Wednesday.

Return to the Lord, your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love. (Joel 2:13)

**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.*

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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***

Vacant

Chair, Board of Social Ministry*

Vacant

Chair, Board of Worship & Music*

Janette Ramirez

Chair, Board of Deacons*

Buff Bethlen

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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

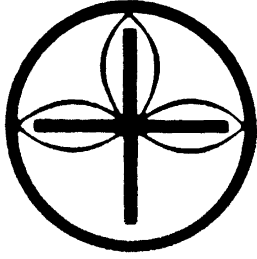
Darlene Fahrenkrog

Lutheran Home

Susan Rosborough

Wunder's Cemetery

Dwight Deppen



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