



## Whitnall Park Lutheran Church

5847 Lilac Lane, Hales Corners, WI 53130

Pastor Michael Fazio

Office Phone (414) 425-1169/ [www.wplc.net](http://www.wplc.net)

Sunday Worship 8:30 am & 10:15 am

Communion Sundays and all Festivals

Services with Healing February 12th

Sunday school 10:15 am

Nursery 10:15 am

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Hales Corners, WI 53130  
Permit #6

DATED MATERIAL  
Return Service Requested

# The Leaf



## February 2012



*February Schedule of Activities*

- Please bring non-perishable food for Hope House on Sundays
- 
- God’s Young Voices meets Sundays at 9:30 am
- 
- Sunday School at 10:15 am—meets in church
- 
- Please bring your aluminum cans on the second Sunday, February 12th ONLY!
- 
- Dorcas Circle meets Tuesdays at 9:00 am
- 
- Parish Nurse, Barb Estrada is here on Wednesday mornings
- 
- Senior Choir meets every Wednesday at 7:30 pm
- 
- Christian Education meeting on Tuesday, February 7th at 7:00 pm
- 
- Property committee meeting on Tuesday, February 14th at 6:30 pm
- 
- Worship & Music meets Tuesday, February 14th at 7:00 pm
- 
- Good News Bible Study meets Wednesday, February 8th at 10:00 am
- 
- OWLS meet on Thursday, February 9th at 8:30 am at the Forum Restaurant
- 
- The Divine Drama Bible Study meets Thursday, February 9th at 7:00 pm
- 
- Friends meet Tuesday, February 28th at 9:30 am



## Getting the Most Out of Home Blood Pressure Monitoring

February is American Heart Month. Knowing your blood pressure readings and keeping those reading within normal limits is one of the ways to help prevent cardiac problems. Some primary physicians recommend that you monitor your own blood pressure frequently especially when you aren't in the doctor's office. Home monitoring also helps you keep tabs on your blood pressure in a familiar setting, make certain your medication is working, and alerts you and your doctor to potential health complications.

Because blood pressure monitors are available widely and without a prescription, home monitoring is easy. The type of monitor you use could depend on your physical condition, your arm size, and ability to hear well. There are 2 types of home blood pressure monitors:

Manual devices use a stethoscope by listening to the sounds of blood flow through the main artery in your upper arm as the pressure decreases in the cuff. Manual monitors are usually less expensive than digital models but can be more difficult to use.

Digital devices automatically calculate heart rate and check your blood pressure by measuring the changes in the motion of your artery as the blood flows through the artery while the cuff deflates. Digital cuffs have a built-in sensor that records the information and shows the reading on a LED screen. Digital monitors can be fitted for the upper arm and wrist. Arm devices are the most accurate and most physicians would prefer that these be used.

What about public blood pressure machines? Machines that are found in public places such as pharmacies may not be accurate. They may not have been properly maintained or the cuff may not be the correct size for you. Taking your blood pressure with an incorrectly sized cuff will give you an erroneous reading.

No matter what type of home blood pressure monitor you choose, proper use requires some practice and training. Take the device to your doctor or nurse to make sure the one you've chosen is the best fit for you, has been calibrated correctly, and to learn how to use it.

Here are some additional tips when taking your blood pressure at home:

Check your monitor's accuracy. Before using a monitor for the first time, have your doctor or nurse check its accuracy against the office model. Have them watch you use the device to see if you're doing it properly.

Don't measure you blood pressure right after you wake up. Your pressure is at its highest first thing in the morning. Wait an hour or so. If you exercise after waking, take your blood pressure before exercising.

Avoid food, caffeine, tobacco and alcohol for 30 minutes before taking a measurement. Also empty your bladder prior to taking you reading.

When you're ready to take your blood pressure, sit quietly for 3-5 minutes before hand. Sit in a comfortable position with your legs and ankles uncrossed and your back supported against a chair. Try to be calm and not think about stressful things. Rest your arm, raised to the level of your heart, on a table, desk or chair arm. It is best to place the cuff on bare skin if possible. Place the cuff on bare skin if possible. Do not roll your sleeve tightly above the cuff as this also may cause an inaccurate reading.

Don't talk while taking your blood pressure.

Home blood pressure monitoring is not a substitute for visits to your doctor. Talk to your doctor about your home blood pressure goal. Also ask what reading should prompt an immediate call to the medical office. Remember to record your blood pressure readings, adding the date and time that you took it. Take your record along to all doctor's appointments.



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**Meeting Dates**

**Monday, February 20, 2012 at 7:00**

Book discussion: Guernsey Literary and Potato Pie Society by Mary Ann Shaffer & Annie Barrows

Set in both London and Guernsey Island, this novel follows author Juliet as she becomes friends with the inhabitants of the island shortly after the end of World War 2. Told in epistolary style, Juliet learns of the occupied island and its deprivations, as well as the resounding spirit of the people who live there. As she writes, she becomes more and more intrigued with the stories of the people who survived the hard times, and she decides to create a book based on their experiences. In order to gather more information, Juliet moves temporarily to the island and soon finds herself immersed in the culture and relationships.

**Monday, March 19, 2012 at 7:00**

Book discussion: The Angels of Morgan Hill by Donna VanLiere

This is the story of a black family's move to a small all-white Tennessee town in 1947. Narrator Jane Gable recalls two critical life events on the same spring day when she was nine years old: the funeral of her alcoholic father and the arrival of a black family of sharecroppers, the first blacks Jane has ever seen in Morgan Hill. Both events converge to make life harder for the impoverished Gables; Jane's mother, Fran, is pregnant, and the black Turner family, hired to work on a tobacco farm, is slighted, harassed and threatened. When the Turners' house burns down, Milo, the only survivor, is taken in by the Gables. VanLiere uses humor, memories of growing up Southern and touching moments of family unity to enrich her story of overcoming racism and poverty.

**A list of the selections for the year can be found on the kiosk.**



**From My Perch:**

Happy New Year to all of you, and since this is a January/February issue, Happy Valentine's Day as well. The Brodies had a wonderful holiday season celebrated

with family and friends. Kent and I were happy to have two of our children home to attend the 6 p.m. service at Whitnall Park Lutheran, and all three of them in attendance at the Christmas Eve 11 p.m. service at St. Luke's, Greendale.

The Confirmation students enjoyed a new worship experience at Ascension Lutheran Church. This is Mission month as Ascension, and we traveled to the church to hear guest Pastor Mary Martha from Hephatha Lutheran Church and to see the liturgical dancers from Hephatha. It was a joyful service, and we were warmly welcomed and even included in the prayers of the day.

The following week we will travel to St. Benedict's to serve during the dinner offered there each evening. We went with a group from Alverno College, and shared a meal with the people who come to eat at St. Ben's as well as serving and cleaning up. It is a privilege to be able to participate in this kind of outreach, and this wonderful group of confirmands seem game to try many new experiences.

We are still trying to get a group of young people together for a Mission Service trip this summer. Please let Kurt or Sharon Kaempfer or me know if your child, grades 6 – 12 is interested.

Another new opportunity for our four students who will be confirmed this year is to "travel" with an adult from our congregation on a faith journey during Lent. Thank you to the four of you who have agreed to mentor our confirmands and to present them for confirmation in the spring. The students who will be confirmed this year include Melody King, Michelle Rubenzer, Joe Hasenstein and Mitchell Cowman. We will install our mentors at the beginning of February.

Also during Lent we will be cooking and helping at the Ash Wednesday pancake supper and collecting "Socks for Soles". Watch for a decorated box and donate new pairs of socks to be donated to various homeless shelters around Milwaukee.

I hope to offer a Bible study for post confirmation students, and I am previewing various programs now. One of the issues I am having is developing a list of high school and college youth active in the congregation. If anyone can help with this, send me contact information, including e-mail addresses so that I can contact this age group. I would also like to create a list of college students and where they are attending, so that I am able to send the appropriate campus minister a note. It often helps students who are living away for the first time to have a connection with the campus minister.

In faith, I remain,

Robin Nehring Brodie robinbrodie@yahoo.com

## WPLC COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES FROM 12/27/11

Members in Attendance: Brian Lynch, Pastor Fazio, Jennifer Breese, Joe Posick, Betty Hembrook, Van Johnson, Donna Winiarski, Joan Lance, Sandy Sannes, Jennine Sonntag Members Absent: Lou Graef, Kurt Kaempfer

### **Jennine Sonntag led Devotions**

#### **Secretary's Report – Jennifer Breese**

The 11/22/11 minutes were approved.

#### **Treasurer's Report – Donna Winiarski**

Monies owed as of 12/1/11: Mortgage -\$293,624 and the parking lot has been paid off.

#### **Pastor's Report -**

Report submitted and available to view in the church office.

#### **Director of Christian Education - Robin Nehring Brodie**

Report submitted and available to view in the church office.

#### **Sunday School Superintendent Report – Kelly Brown**

Report submitted and available to view in the church office.

### **Committee Reports:**

#### **Christian Education – Jennine Sonntag**

The committee is in the process of planning a week long summer mission trip for the youth at WPLC.

#### **Endowment – Jennifer Breese and Kurt Kaempfer-** No report

#### **Finance – Joe Posick**

The Council approved that \$45,000, which has been at Associated Bank, be moved to Edward Jones into a bond that will yield 3 1/2% a year for a two year term.

#### **Fellowship – Sandy Sannes**

Thank you to everyone who gave of their time, talent, and money for the wonderful wreaths, decorations, and poinsettias that decorated the church beautifully for Christmas.

#### **Health and Wellness – Joan Lance** – No Report

#### **Worship and Music – Donna Winiarski and Betty Hembrook** – No Report

#### **Property – Van Johnson**

Two garage doors for the parsonage need to be replaced and the cost per door is \$523.

#### **Stewardship- Kurt Kaempfer and Brian Lynch -** No report

#### **Social Ministry- Betty Hembrook**

Our congregation donated 950 pounds of food and \$75.00 to a grateful Hope House from donations given to the "Fill the Truck" food drive. Please continue to contribute non-perishable food items for the Food Pantry at Hope House because the need has increased in this tough economic climate.

The Coffee House on December 4, which was sponsored by the Social Ministry Committee, raised \$57.50 for Project RETURN. This mission helps ex-offenders to return to their community, family and friends.

The Hunger Task Force received \$468 which was raised at the Thanksgiving Eve service and an additional \$35.23 was given at the Produce Table for this cause.

"Souper" Bowl Sunday will be held on Sunday, February 5, 2012.

### **New Business**

Committee reports need to be submitted to Lisa, our church secretary, for the annual meeting on February 5.

### **Old Business**

Annual staff reviews are in the process of being completed.

The next Council meeting will be on January 24, 2012.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jennifer Breese, Secretary



# Birthdays & Anniversaries

## February Anniversaries

- 10 Ray & Diane Remington
- 14 Evelyn & Don Schubert 59
- 22 Roger & Gloria Brinkmeier

## February Birthdays

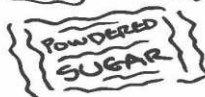
- |    |                    |    |                    |
|----|--------------------|----|--------------------|
| 1  | Karen Budic        | 15 | Sharon Hause       |
|    | Bradford Cheney    |    | Betty Senft        |
| 2  | Ericka Pasersky    | 16 | Louise Ludwig      |
|    | Karl Vierthaler    | 17 | Sally Cole         |
| 5  | Connor Braun       | 18 | Nancy Ahles        |
|    | June Hackbart      |    | Scott Keske        |
|    | Carolyn Staats     |    | Patricia Messenger |
| 6  | Katie Katschke     |    | Lee Robbins        |
|    | Patricia Noeske    |    | Kristen Wiza       |
|    | Jessica Williamson | 19 | Kristine Laposki   |
| 7  | Joseph Seaks       |    | Ronald Sonntag     |
| 8  | Nancy Sherman      | 21 | Bonnie Hareng      |
| 9  | Makayla Metzger    |    | Sarah Schlueter    |
| 10 | Betty Hembrook     | 23 | Thomas Laposki     |
|    | Evan Knier         |    | Patricia Suderland |
|    | Max Ringwall       | 25 | Donald Jeske       |
|    |                    |    | Chad Thome         |
| 11 | Brent Rice         | 26 | Sandy Johnson      |
|    | Carol Welch        |    | Thomas Nelson      |
|    | Joann Wollmer      |    | Joanna Stollenwerk |
| 12 | Julie Dlouhy       | 27 | Lorraine Graef     |
|    | Shirley Koniecki   |    | Elsie Hansen       |
| 13 | Alison Thompson    |    | Duane Hause        |
| 15 | Sharon Hause       |    | Lucas Hoffmann     |
|    | Betty Senft        |    | Fred Ludwig        |
| 16 | Louise Ludwig      | 28 | Alexander Metzger  |
| 17 | Sally Cole         |    | Lori Ridder        |

## LOVE TREATS

Show others love by baking them a lovely treat!

### What you need:

- ♥ An adult to help
- ♥ Refrigerated cookie dough (sugar or chocolate chip)
- ♥ Jar of red jam (raspberry or strawberry)
- ♥ 1 or 2 heart-shaped cookie cutters. (If you use 2, make sure they are different sizes.)
- ♥ Powdered sugar
- ♥ Sifter
- ♥ Knife



### What you do:

1. Follow the cookie dough directions for rolling out the dough.
2. If you are using one cookie cutter, cut out the heart-shaped cookies and transfer to a baking sheet. Try to have an even number of hearts when finished.
3. If you are using two cookie cutters, cut out the large hearts. Take half of the hearts, and cut out a small heart window in the center with the smaller cookie cutter. Now you have a heart inside another heart.
4. Have an adult help you bake the cookies according to the dough directions.
5. After baking, place the cookies on a cooling rack.
6. When the cookies are cooled, make cookie sandwiches by spreading jam onto the flat side of half the cookies, and then placing another cookie on top of each one. (If you made cookie windows, use those for the tops.)
7. Sprinkle powdered sugar over your heart sandwiches with a sifter.
8. Share the cookies with the people you love.



## But the Greatest of These Is LOVE!

God shows love to us every day and in many ways. Fill in the blanks below with the missing letters to see how God loves us perfectly!

“For God so lo \_ \_ ed the world,  
 that he g \_ \_ ve  
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 So \_ \_  
 \_ \_ hat whosoever  
 believeth \_ \_ n Him  
 should \_ \_ ot perish,  
 but have \_ \_ verlasting life.

—John 3:16, KJV



## Social Ministry Update

### "Souper" Bowl of Caring!!! Sunday, February 5th

The "*Souper*" Bowl project is your opportunity to join forces with thousands around the United States to raise money for the charity of their choice.

Members of Whitnall Park are encouraged to bring **cans of soup** (any size or variety; chili with beans, spaghetti with meatballs, hash, pork and beans, beef stew, and any other canned meal are also welcome as well as any other non-perishable food item) or **drop dollars into the soup kettles** placed at both entrances to the church sanctuary. The food items and money collected will go to the South Side Food Pantry at Hope House. Please transform the nation's biggest day of football into the "*Souper Bowl of Caring*" with your gifts.

### Health & Wellness/Luther Manor Update

Whitnall Park Lutheran Church is a corporate partner with Luther Manor and because of this we have been able to offer programs of interest to our congregation. We now are able to offer a series of classes on Brain Health. **Get Proactive with Brain Health** is a limited educational course (four 1 ½ hour classes or six 1 hour classes) over a four or six week period that focuses on risk factors for memory loss and preventative measures. Sessions include – can memory be improved, myths of aging and normal aging, how the brain and memory work, nutrition to support brain health, the heart-brain connection and memory techniques and mental fitness exercises.

This series of classes is offered at a cost of \$60 for each participant. There is an interest sign up sheet on the kiosk for those who might be interested in taking this. We would need a minimum of 10 participants to be able to offer the classes. This series has been very successful and well received in many congregations.

If interested, please sign up and more information will follow.

Kathy Sonntag, Key Person  
Sandy Abraham, Co-worker



Thanks to all who contributed to our "mitten" tree. We finished this year with 146 pairs of mittens, 93 hats, 37 scarves, and 4 snowsuits. The majority were delivered to Hope House. A box of the adult sized hats and scarves were delivered to the Homeless Veterans Initiative. We will do this again next year, so if you see those items on sale and want to stock up, or want to keep knitting and crocheting these items, keep us in mind. And for those who knit or crochet, the prayer shawl ministry continues on Tuesday at 1pm.



The 2012 Altar Flower Calendar is now posted on the kiosk. If you are interested in placing flowers on the altar in remembrance or honor of a loved one (or any other occasion) please sign up on the date of your choice. Thank you.

**February 5**

**8:30**    **Assisting Minister** Linda Shea                      **Acolyte** Evan Grubis  
**Ushers** Ron Hause, Carl Hanson, Nancy Collura  
**Greeter** Al Schubert  
**Altar Guild** Barb Meyrose-McIntyre

**10:15**    **Assisting Minister** Joan Henderson              **Acolyte** Jessie Kaboskey  
**Ushers** Paul Saari, Gregg Sarri, Ron Noeske  
**Greeter** Sue Schlueter                                      **Nursery** Becky Sorvick  
**Altar Guild** Bernice King

**February 12—Healing Services**

**8:30**    **Assisting Minister** Jane Dillon-Perkl              **Acolyte** Abby Callahan  
**Ushers** Ken Perkl, John Hembrook, Jerrijo Cowman  
**Greeter** Ellen Dallmann  
**Altar Guild** Sandy Johnson

**10:15**    **Assisting Minister** Tom Laposki                      **Acolyte** Zachary Paneitz  
**Ushers** Tom Laposki, Brian and Kristi Peyer  
**Greeter** Kris Laposki                                      **Nursery** Laura Rakow

**February 19—Transfiguration of Our Lord**

**8:30**    **Assisting Minister** Jerrijo Cowman                      **Acolyte** Kaitlyn Martin  
**Ushers** Jim & Linda Shea  
**Greeter** Dolores Porath  
**Altar Guild** Bernice Sparacino

**10:15**    **Assisting Minister** Laurie Sorvick                      **Acolyte** Lucas Hoffmann  
**Ushers** Larry Pfeil, Brian Martin, Jack King, Ron Sorenson  
**Greeter** Don Jeske    **Nursery** Julie & Danielle Sorenson  
**Altar Guild** Sandy Abraham

**February 22— Ash Wednesday**
**February 26— 1st Sunday in Lent**

**8:30**    **Assisting Minister** Marjorie Pagel                      **Acolyte** Brittney Henneberry  
**Ushers** Jim Gaffney, Duane Hause, Lyle Lance  
**Greeter** Joan Lance

**10:15**    **Assisting Minister** Mike Sparacino                      **Acolyte** Scott Johnson  
**Ushers** Jerry Pagel, Jerome Thome, Walter Sievert, Michael Prescott  
**Greeter** Jerry Rakow    **Nursery** Kim Aderman  
**Altar Guild** Sandra Martin

From My Sunday School Desk,

Happy New Year!

We are all back from our holiday break and ready to get back into the swing of things. I hope that you had a chance to check out our birth announcements that we made, announcing the news of Jesus' birth. Be sure to watch for future art work.

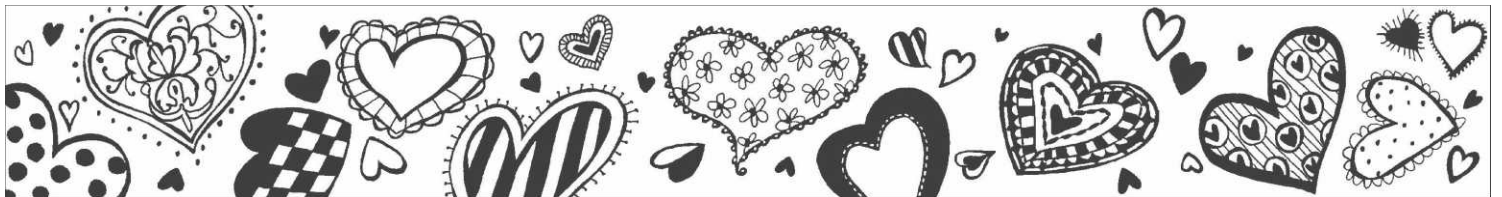
The holidays were a great time for family, friends and thoughtfulness. Our holiday toy collection for Hope House was a big success. Thank you to everyone that donated toys and wrapping supplies. Hope House also sponsors some housing for Veterans. We extended our gift giving to help those Veterans and because of the incredible generosity, our Veteran gift collection was also a great success. Thank you everyone for your support.

Our Sunday school Christmas program "Is It Really Christmas" was directed by Kim Brown. Thank you to the children for a great performance and a big thank you to everyone that helped with the production.

Best wishes for a healthy and happy new year. I leave you with this thought:

*God gave you a gift of 86,400 seconds today, have you used one to say "thank you?"*  
*William A. Ward*

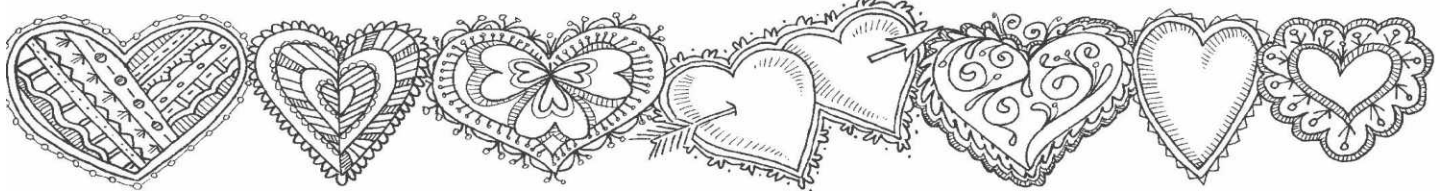
Your friend in Christ,  
 Kelly Brown, Sunday School Superintendent



### ***Sr. High School Scholarships Available through Church Endowment Fund***

The Whitnall Park Lutheran Endowment Fund offers scholarships to Senior High School graduates who plan to further their education by attending a vocational school, college, or university following graduation. Application form and guidelines are available in the Church Office or may be downloaded from the church website, [www.whitnallparkchurch.com](http://www.whitnallparkchurch.com) or [www.wplc.net](http://www.wplc.net). The scholarship is available for the 2012-13 academic year. **DEADLINE for submitting the application is April 15, 2012...**mark your calendars...don't miss out on this great opportunity.

# FEBRUARY 2012



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<p><i>1</i> 9:30 AM Parish Nurse is in 7:30pm Senior Choir</p>	<p><i>2</i></p>	<p><i>3</i> Pastor's day off</p>	<p><i>4</i></p>
<p><i>5</i> 8:30 &amp; 10:15 am Worship 9:30 am God's Young Voices 10:15 am Sunday School 11:15 am ANNUAL MEETING</p>	<p><i>6</i> 7:00 pm Dartball (away)</p>	<p><i>7</i> 9:00 am Dorcas Circle 12:20 pm Sit n' Be Fit 1:00 pm Knitting &amp; Crocheting 7:00 pm Christian Ed Meeting</p>	<p><i>8</i> 9:30 AM Parish Nurse is in 10:00 am Good News Bible Study 7:30pm Senior Choir</p>	<p><i>9</i> 8:30 am OWLS meet at the Forum 7:00 pm Divine Drama Bible Study</p>	<p><i>10</i> Pastor's day off  LEAF Articles Due</p>	<p><i>11</i></p>
<p><i>12</i> 8:30 &amp; 10:15 am Worship—Healing Services 9:30 am God's Young Voices 10:15 am Sunday School</p>	<p><i>13</i> 7:00 pm Dartball (home)</p>	<p><i>14</i> 9:00 am Dorcas Circle 1:00 pm Knitting &amp; Crocheting 6:30 pm Property Committee Meeting 7:00 pm Worship &amp; Music</p>	<p><i>15</i> 7:30pm Senior Choir</p>	<p><i>16</i></p>	<p><i>17</i> 9:30 AM Parish Nurse is in 10:00 am Health &amp; Wellness  Pastor's day off</p>	<p><i>18</i></p>
<p><i>19</i> 8:30 &amp; 10:15 am Worship 9:30 am God's Young Voices 10:15 am Sunday School</p>	<p><i>20</i> 7:00 pm Dartball (home)</p>	<p><i>21</i> 9:00 am Dorcas Circle 1:00 pm Knitting &amp; Crocheting 7:00 pm Council Meeting</p>	<p><i>22</i> ASH WEDNESDAY  9:30 AM Parish Nurse is in 7:00 pm Ash Wednesday Worship</p>	<p><i>23</i> Assemble Leaf</p>	<p><i>24</i> Pastor's day off</p>	<p><i>25</i></p>
<p><i>26</i> 1st Sunday in Lent 8:30 &amp; 10:15 am Worship 9:30 am God's Young Voices 10:15 am Sunday School</p>	<p><i>27</i> 7:00 pm Dartball (away)</p>	<p><i>28</i> 9:00 am Dorcas Circle 9:30 am Friends Meeting 12:30 pm Sit n' Be Fit 1:00 pm Knitting &amp; Crocheting</p>	<p><i>29</i> 9:30 AM Parish Nurse is in 7:30pm Senior Choir</p>			

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As I'm thinking about January, I'm looking down the barrel of my 42<sup>nd</sup> birthday on the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month.

One thing that I like about having my birthday on this particular day is that on the same day of the church

calendar, we celebrate the conversion of "Saul" into St. Paul. Thus, St. Paul holds a special place in my heart. His conversion is a remarkable story, documented in the ninth chapter of the book of Acts...following are some highlights:



## FROM THE PASTOR

*Paul's entire life can be explained in terms of one experience—his meeting with Jesus on the road to Damascus. In an instant, he saw that all the zeal of his dynamic personality was being wasted. Perhaps he had never seen Jesus, who was only a few years older, but he had acquired a zealot's hatred of all Jesus stood for, as he began to harass the Church: "...entering house after house and dragging out men and women, he handed them over for imprisonment" (Acts 8:3b). Now he himself was "entered," possessed, all his energy harnessed to one goal—being a slave of Christ in the ministry of reconciliation, an instrument to help others experience the one Savior.*

*One sentence determined his theology: "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting" (Acts 9:5b). Jesus was mysteriously identified with people—the loving group of people Saul had been running down like criminals. Jesus, he saw, was the mysterious fulfillment of all he had been blindly pursuing.*

*From then on, his only work was to "present everyone perfect in Christ. For this I labor and struggle, in accord with the exercise of his power working within me" (Colossians 1:28b-29). "For our gospel did not come to you in word alone, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and [with] much conviction" (1 Thessalonians 1:5a).*

*Paul's life became a tireless proclaiming and living out of the message of the cross: Christians die baptismally to sin and are buried with Christ; we are dead to all that is sinful and unredeemed in the world.*

*We are made into a new creation, already sharing Christ's victory and someday to rise from the dead like him. Through this risen Christ the Father pours out the Spirit on us, making us completely new.*

*So Paul's great message to the world was: You are saved entirely by God, not by anything you can do.*

As a Pastor, and even more importantly as a Christian man and head of a family, I need the constant reminder that as "all things have been made new in Him", I too am part of the newness of God's ongoing creative activity and have been "converted" from sin into grace, just as Saul was transformed into St. Paul.

This New Year...as you contemplate your resolutions, remember that in the new changes you may be implementing into your life...your life itself is constantly being renewed as the freely given gift of Him who loves you more than you could ever imagine.

God's Peace and Blessings,

Pr. Michael

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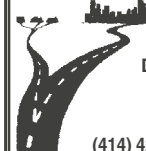
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