

# CORNERSTONE

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## “THERE IS A PLACE FOR YOU AT ST. PAUL’S”

October 2019

St. Paul’s Lutheran Church

Volume 25, Issue 9



Dear Partners in Ministry,

Wow! What an interesting time to be a part of Pittsburgh Lutheran United Ministries (PLUM)! It’s hard to believe that it has been just been 16 months since we celebrated Pastor Beth’s retirement, followed by Pastor Melba’s announcement that she was looking at a new opportunity with a different pace, giving her more time to be a mother of a teenager and grandma to her ever-expanding tribe of munchkins. Pastor Jocelyn had not yet stepped into our frying pan, blessing us with her ministry for a year as a transitional interim pastor. Vicar Brenda was not yet our intern and was just starting her Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) at the VA Hospital. Vicar Sue was just completing her second year of seminary at Luther Seminary long distance education and our new intern, Vicar Mandy, was not even on our radar. Everything seemed to be going along well. Pastor Martin was willing to step up as needed. Pastors Paul and Liz were doing their stellar ministries in our midst.

East liberty Lutheran Church was just getting their contract for the sale of their building. Trinity Lutheran Church, Sheraden was exploring new opportunities for ministry and looking for best options on what to do with their building. We hadn’t done our first PLUM-wide “Rise against Hunger” Event. Our two preschools, one at Lutheran Church of Our Savior in N. Huntingdon, and one at Resurrection Lutheran

Church in Oakdale, were in the process of changing their leadership. A lot of significant activity, not to mention the “normal” busyness of 10 churches’ ministries.

It is here that last week’s lectionary narrative strikes home to me. Here’s Abraham and Sarah, the patriarchs of our faith, entertaining strangers who remind them of God’s promise to them made years before. Sarah’s response is a muffled “laugh,” “yeah, right.”

It was just about 16 years ago when Pastor Beth came to me and said, “John, how do we stabilize our churches so they will outlive us?” And on that premise PLUM, as a Cooperative Ministry, came to be. And it could not have happened without the willingness to explore and try and adapt and modify and be the body of Christ that each of you has helped us to be. We are at our best when we are the body of Christ working together, sharing to the best of our abilities each other’s burdens and most importantly sharing in the spreading of His gospel. And I am so excited about our future because I know we’ve watched God bless us every step of the way in our past. The team that’s evolving around us with the call vote in each of our congregations on October 6 of Vicar Brenda Henry to be one of our pastors is but the next step in our evolution to be the best we can be.

I can’t tell you how many times Pastors Beth, Paul, and I have stood in the privacy of our “tents,” either individually or collectively, when we’ve heard ideas from you folks or our own brainstorm and “laughed” to ourselves and said “yeah, right,” only to allow God and his power and grace to fulfill his promises to us and bring us to where we are today. Our current pastoral team as we gather around the table has changed dramatically. Pastor Paul and I, along with Vicar Brenda, Vicar Mandy, and soon to

be Vicar Sue, have the potential of providing some awesome leadership for our churches as we look to the future and take our next steps.

I know technically it's premature but please mark your calendars for November 3, which is all Saints' Sunday, for the installation and ordination of Vicar Brenda to be our pastor. The service will be held at Christ Lutheran Church at 3 PM and everyone's welcome.

In Christ's Service,  
*Pastor John*



Collectively we did it again! Partnering with St. John's Lutheran Church in North Versailles, PA, along with each of our ten PLUM congregations, we put together 15,000 meals for Rise Against Hunger on Saturday, September 7. God's work and our hands became a reality. 85 willing people accomplished this feat in less than two hours. Each of our PLUM congregations was asked to contribute \$315. That Saturday we submitted \$3,500.77 from PLUM, and St. John's Lutheran Church (North Versailles) contributed \$1,725, to cover the cost of shipping these packages, for a total of \$5,165.77. Some PLUM congregations actually went above and beyond the \$315 donation. We will know in approximately one month where these meals were distributed. Last year's packaged meals went to Nicaragua. There is enthusiasm on everyone's part to do this event next September so keep your calendars open to once again participate in this collective PLUM mission project. A morning of high energy and enthusiasm was experienced by all.

Check out the PLUM website ([www.plumofpa.com](http://www.plumofpa.com)) for a link to many photos from our 2019 Rise Against Hunger Event!



The PLUM Combined Handbell Choir is gearing up for another performance! We are once again reaching out to all PLUM churches to see if there are any PLUM members who would like to join our combined PLUM Handbell Choir. The Bell Choir plans to be a part of the future Ordination Service of Brenda Henry. We hope that God willing, this service will take place on Sunday, November 3, 2019. We are really looking forward to being a part of Brenda's big day. In preparation, the handbell choir will meet for practices on the following Saturdays at 2:00pm (October 19, October 26, and November 2). Practices will take place in the Sanctuary of Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church (3104 W. Liberty Ave, Dormont 15216).

Bethany has a three-octave set of handbells, including chimes. Some musical knowledge is helpful, but not necessary. We will teach you! The choir plays a variety of music and those that joined us the last time, found the bell playing experience to be a great deal of fun.

If you would like to be a part of our joint choir, please contact Karen in the Church office at Bethany (412-531-9363 or [bethany-dormont@verizon.net](mailto:bethany-dormont@verizon.net)). We would love to have you join us in this musical endeavor. We look forward to hearing from you!



There will be special congregational meeting after the service on Sunday, October 6<sup>th</sup> to vote whether to extend a call to Vicar Brenda for PLUM. All are urged to attend



St. Paul's is participating in the Thrivent Member Network's Pop Tab Challenge. We will be collecting tabs from cans through Sunday, December 1<sup>st</sup>. The collected pop tabs will be used for Ronald McDonald charities. There is a box on the window sill in the Narthex and also a plastic container on the desk in the Fellowship Hall. If you would like to have a poster for your workplace, please see Jill.



We are also collecting Boxes Tops for Education to be sent to Bethesda's Children Home. All box tops need to be at the church by Sunday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>. The Monthly mission emphasis for October is also Bethesda Children's Home. The church will be receiving contributions during the month. The monetary donations along with the Box Tops collected will be sent to Bethesda to assist them in their ministry.



### Did You Know about this Giving Option for Seniors?

As part of The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016, Congress permanently reinstated a taxpayer's ability to take annual required minimum distributions (RMD's) from their IRA's and contribute those withdrawals directly to charitable organizations, treating them as tax-free distributions. These

transactions are called qualified charitable distributions (QCD's). If you are age 70½ or older, you generally must withdraw a RMD each year from your traditional IRA and/or employer-sponsored retirement plan. This new legislation gives you a convenient way to satisfy IRA distribution requirements, support charitable causes, and lower your adjust gross income all at the same time. If you are interested in contributing directly to St. Paul's in this manner, contact your financial institution(s) where your IRA's are invested to see if they can accommodate your request.



Camp Agape` is having a Fall Foliage Day on Saturday, October 12<sup>th</sup> from NOON to 4:00 p.m. It will be a fun-filled afternoon to enjoy our new activity field, do some crafts, paint a pumpkin, walk the Meditation Trail, take a wagon ride, tour the property, meet the Staff (including some Cabin Leaders), meet up with old friends and make new ones with a S'more at the campfire. Camp Picnic Lunch will be served from Noon until 3:00 at the Pavilion.



Beginning at 4:00 there will be a Service of Thanksgiving and Dedication as those present give thanks for a safe summer of ministry and dedicate the new Cross, our Activity Field, and the addition to the Resource and Learning Center. Bishop Kurt Kusserow will be presiding at the service. Hors d'oeuvres and desert will follow the service.



**October Assistants and Sponsors**

**Assisting Minister**

- ❖ October 6 – Ann Morrocco
- ❖ October 13 – Corey Ferens
- ❖ October 20 – Carol Ferens
- ❖ October 27 – Jill A. Shook

**Eternal Candle**

- ❖ Jill A. Shook

**Fellowship**

- ❖ October 6 – Jill A. Shook
- ❖ October 30 – Ruth Latta

**Flowers**

- ❖ October 6 – Jill A. Shook
- ❖ October 13
- ❖ October 20 – Ruth Latta
- ❖ October 27 – Ann Morrocco

**Lectors**

- ❖ October 6 – Mike, Carol, Corey Ferens
- ❖ October 13 – Mark Pollo
- ❖ October 20
- ❖ October 27

If you are interested in serving as an assistant or sponsoring the eternal candle or flowers, please contact the church office (724-745-5962) or email: [stpaulscbg@verizon.net](mailto:stpaulscbg@verizon.net).



**Worship Schedule**

October 6	Vicar Mandy Gilberti
October 13	Rev. Martin Rafanan
October 20	Rev. Martin Rafanan
October 27	Vicar Brenda Henry

**Pastor's schedule is subject to change without notice.**



Keep in your prayers: Ev, Matthew, Anna Mae, Nancy, Pat, Alex, Mark, Albert, Patty, Pam, Virginia, Jennifer, Betty Jane, Rich, Rachel, Pat, Donna, Cooper, Edward, Anna Mae, Eddie, Randy, Steve, Barbara, Tom, Charlotte, John, Tondi, Pastor Wayne, Kelly, Mike, Colin, Jeff, Tracey, the Miller, Paulick, Galano, Burchesky, Grove, Richmond families. If anyone should be added or removed, please contact the church office (724-745-5962) or email: [stpaulscbg@verizon.net](mailto:stpaulscbg@verizon.net).



Samantha Mrvos	October 7
Karen Billingham	October 9
Jim Filby	October 13
Sammie Jo Richmond	October 22