

Greetings St. Paul Lutheran Church!

I know many people call it “Doom Scrolling” when you scroll on Facebook, and of course, depending on the algorithms of the day, there can be doom but so many times when I scroll through my Facebook page I find uplifting or thought-provoking posts. I found one by a pastor I follow. He is the pastor of the Cast Members Church at Disney World. While I don’t agree with everything he posts, the one I scrolled by the other day resonated with me especially at Christmastime or our higher season of guests at St. Paul. It’s a reminder that we are here for not only ourselves and to worship Jesus but especially for those who are new or newer to St. Paul or faith in general.

Pr. Steven Barr wrote, “Walking through a Disney park is easy for me, even on a crowded day. After 14 years, I know how to move through thousands of people, like a running back reading the defense. I spot the openings, adjust on the fly, and move quickly into open space. But every now and then, an unassuming family brings everything to a halt. They stop in the middle of the walkway, maps out, talking about the next ride, the next meal, or the nearest bathroom. Suddenly, I have to make a major course correction because slowing down is not my instinct. And as I mumble in my head about the inconsiderate obstruction in front of me, it hits me. These people are the very reason Disney exists. They are the guests. They are the reason Cast Members have jobs. And strangely, they are the reason that Church Member Church can exist, too. That moment does more than expose my impatience. It tells something deeper about how easily familiarity can cause us to forget why we’re here. Somewhere along the way, those of us who have learned how to move efficiently in faith can grow frustrated with those who move at a different pace. They stop mid-stride. They change directions suddenly. They ask basic questions. They seem to slow everything down. We can feel like they are impeding our progress. But the truth is, they are not in the way. They are the reason we are here. The Church does not exist just for those who already know the way. It exists for those still unfolding the map.”

It's a good reminder for us in the church and I will also try to remember this when I'm at Disney in mid-January too. 😊

Here is the list of upcoming ministries until Lent.

Sunday, January 11, is Baptism of Our Lord Sunday. The theme will be the ABCs of the Baptism of Our Lord. There are multiple speaking parts available, most of them are short. Please let me know if you are interested in reading that day.

And then that brings us to our Four Weeks of Favorites! Sundays January 18-February 8. On the insert in the bulletin this week, there is a space for you to put your favorite songs/hymns. **Please turn these in by Christmas Eve.** And start looking for your favorite recipes to bring for fellowship time after worship.

Bread for the World is an advocacy ministry that St. Paul has support for many years. If you remember writing letters to our elected officials in support of WIC or other food legislation, that was Bread for the World. There is a great opportunity to hear the CEO of Bread for the World, Rev. Eugene Cho. He'll be speaking at a luncheon at Palm Aire Country Club on **Friday, February 6 at 11:30a.** St. Paul will have a table of 8 and can get another if more people sign up. The sign up is in the narthex. **Must sign up by January 25.**

Shrove Saturday variety show is on Saturday, February 14. The theme is love.

Then it's Shiny Jesus Sunday with Transfiguration on February 15. And then it's Lent. I said before, if we blink it will be Lent.

God bless you all
-PrAshley