

Greetings St. Paul Lutheran Church!

Thank you to all who attended the **VBS Fundraiser pancake breakfast**. It raised \$859 for VBS. And I know there have been other gifts given for VBS, so it's about \$1,000 raised so far for VBS – Food Truck Party. This is great! I try not to take St. Paul folks for granted, but I'm not surprised at your generosity. You are an amazing congregation. It's second nature to this congregation to see a need and fill it. Just remember that not every congregation is like that. St. Paul is a special place.



On Sunday you'll hear about **Synod Assembly** from our two voting members Irene Felicetti and Marty Hillerich. I want to share here a little bit more of my take-aways from Assembly too. We had a speaker, Dr. Luis Torres-Hostos. He was an engaging speaker sharing with us his research and experience with health, immigration, cultural diversity, and religion. I will be referencing some of his teachings during my sermon on Sunday.

He tells the story of when he walked into his new place of employment to meet one of his employees and she assumed that he was a custodian and asked him to take out her garbage. He gladly did that. And when he came back, he introduced himself as her boss. Of course, that was awkward but they were able to have a good conversation afterward and it led to a good working relationship. He could have chosen not to take out her garbage and made a big deal about her assumptions but he chose not to and both of them were better for it.

It's an example of how our brains make assumptions based on what we have seen. When we see people of color being the ones who take out the garbage, we assume a new person of color in the office is the custodian. Who we see in different roles makes a difference. It made me think of a congregation that only had women as pastors for years. The little boys in the congregation asked, "Can boys be pastors too?" They hadn't seen a man preaching or leading so their brains made the connection that's only something women do.



It's our brains that make these connections. It's human. It's natural. He even made the connection to the story of the Good Samaritan. We often try to emulate the Samaritan who helps the one who was beat up. But he likened us to the one who was beat up instead. That's the human condition, broken and in need of a savior. And through the help of Jesus, we can get beyond the way our brains are wired and choose to see God in everyone we meet, even if they don't look like us.

You'll also hear on Sunday from Marty about a great opportunity for the **Florida-Bahamas Synod** and our input is needed. A congregation in the Miami area closed and it has left \$8 million to the Synod. The synod wants to know our priorities for using this money. There is a short survey for you to fill out. Everyone's input is wanted.

[surveymonkey.com/r/85MLNQ7](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/85MLNQ7)

I also have some **good news** to share about the status of the state grant process for the refurbishment of the roof and architecturally significant parts of the Education Building. You may remember last September we applied for a grant from the state that would pay for about ½ of the project. We were informed that our project will be funded! So please stay tuned for more information on what is needed to start this project.

Take care and God bless,

6.17.22

*-PrAshley*

