

THE CHURCH ON THE HIGHWAY

Where Life and Jesus Intersect

St. Paul Lutheran Church

November 2020 Edition



From Our Senior Pastor

Rev. Larry Krueger

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A Christian Voting Guide (A Couple of Pastors' Opinions)

During the time of elections, especially presidential elections, many people look to guides about how one should vote. Of course, to oblige this need for guidance there are many who write voting guides. However, these may, or may not, be reliable depending on the opinion or bias of the author(s). And, especially in these times of social media and fake news, one may question the reliability of the information being shared.

I have been asked over the years if there is Christian voting guide. The answer is, "Of course, there is." It is called The Holy Bible. Admittedly, parts of God's word deal with the specific theocracy of the nation of Israel. Having said that, it remains that all of God's word is timeless and applicable for all ages. While it may be difficult to manage application of the whole word of God to every election scenario, God has given us a simplified guide of how He desires the people He created to live with one another. That simple guide is known as the Ten Commandments.

Since the Ten Commandments serve as the Creator's guide for how the world and the people within it should function, it would follow that we would want elected officials who most closely follow the Ten Commandments in the civil realm of governance. The fact is, the applicability of the commandments has served as a guide in our country, as is witnessed in the history of their display in civil halls of justice. Albeit, such displays have been challenged and even removed in recent years.

In Luther's Small Catechism on Confession, in consideration of "What sins should we confess," he writes, "Which are these?" At this point he penned, "Consider your place in life according to the Ten Commandments." That same consideration seems like an applicable litmus test when determining for which candidate to cast a vote at election time. In other words, do candidates uphold the Ten Commandments in their life, practice, and governance, or not?

While the Ten Commandments can serve as a useful Christian guide for voting, is it foolproof? Herein lies the conundrum. Nobody is perfect. Even a quick glance of candidates reveals sinfulness in all. Thus, the question becomes, which one do you think will rule in closest accord with the commandments for the best welfare of the people and society? From the book, "What Luther Says" (Concordia Publishing House copyright 1959, page 582), the following Luther quote may be applicable.

(continues on page 7)



Sunday Worship
Streamed online at
10:30 a.m. at
www.splcwaco.com
or the church
[Facebook page.](#)

Board of Director's Board Reports

President's Report

I know we had all hoped and prayed that we would be back to normal worship and fellowship together by this time. Pastor Kruger shared in one of his sermons in October that we must remember that regardless of what is happening in our world or in our personal lives, "God is in Control." When I reflect on his sermon during this period of COVID-19, my thoughts are turned to the blessings we continue to receive, even during a pandemic. We are reminded of the members who continue to volunteer and serve the St. Paul family throughout the pandemic, some physically at the Church, others from their home, computer and telephone. While there are too many to name, we do want to say thanks to those who continue to ensure the worship and ongoing business of St. Paul during this pandemic. The Board of Directors and their committees have continued keep the St. Paul Congregation informed and as we anticipate the time when are able to once again gather, worship and fellowship with each other. I know that you, like me, miss being able to worship in the sanctuary and participate in Sunday School and Bible Class and other fellowship activities as we did before COVID-19. But as Pastor said, when things seem out of control, remember that "God is in Control."

Thanks to the committee planning the dedication of the Family Center honoring Pastor and Mrs. Albers, for the updates and progress and with hopes that we will be able to hold the dedication in the spring.

A special thanks to the choir for the beautiful anthems that they have shared recently during worship. The choir was able to be practice safe distancing using the special masks that were designed for use by choirs. It was a blessing whether you heard the anthems in the sanctuary or online.

Treasurer's Report

- A full breakdown of financial information is available in the church office.
- **Expenditures** - As of Sept. 30th regular contributions are under budget by 12% and total expenditures are under budget by 9%. Thru Sept. 30th the impact from COVID 19 on contributions has for the most part been offset by lower expenditures.
- There have been several notable expenditures in 2020.
- In the January Board of Directors meeting the board voted to make a special contribution of \$25,000.00 to District and Synod Mission support and voted to spend \$4,168.00 for additional speakers to help improve the sound system in the Family Center.
- In the July Board of Directors meeting the board voted to make a special contribution of \$5,000.00 to District and Synod Mission support, a special contribution of \$5,000.00 to Camp Lone Star and we moved \$5,000.00 from the general fund to the Benevolence Fund for members that may need special assistance during COVID 19.
- Thru Sept. 30th the overall contribution to District and Synod Mission support is at 19% (\$86,980.00) of regular contributions.

Board of Elders

- Elders are continuing Covid-19 protocols with communion and drive-thru communion.
- We recently purchased a new keyboard piano for the sanctuary and new masks for the choir.

Board of Building & Grounds

- John Banta has been working on drainage problems near the main entrance. The sump pump has been replaced, and he will be adding a french drain. TXDOT is aware of a drainage issue the construction has created facing IH35.
- Jeremy Lange is working on an upgrade to the Security System this will include a better way of recording the cameras along with adding additional cameras to cover more of the parking lot and outbuilding.
- A new 5 year electricity contract with TXU has been signed. They gave us a better rate and a \$1100 green savings we can claim for the LED lighting we have already installed.
- Most of our Emergency Exit signs in the Sanctuary and around the building were not functioning properly. They were replaced with better units.
- We had an air-conditioning unit fail in office wing. It was a very old unit and was more cost effective to replace than repair. Circle R heating and air (John Ed Mach's company) replaced.
- We also had the Carpet cleaned and Scotch guarded in the Sanctuary and all the floors stripped and waxed while the church was not too busy.
- We have purchased hand sanitizers and sanitizing spray in the Sanctuary early in the year but all has been going well on that part.

Board of Fellowship

- The Fellowship Committee is anxious to get back on track in planning events for the congregation.

Board of Outreach

- The Outreach Committee had several college outreach functions with Pastor K.
- The committee gave \$1600.00 in donations to the Guatemala Food Distribution effort.
- We also gave Tri-Cities ministry \$900 for local rental assistance.
- School supplies were collected and distributed to LaVega ISD.

Board of Children's Ministry

- At Home Sunday School materials are being emailed to families that requested them on a weekly basis.
- We are anxious to resume on-site Sunday School classes for the younger age groups as soon as safely possible.

Board of Youth Ministry

- The Youth group is holding Sunday morning Bible classes in the Youth Room each Sunday.
- This ministry is anxious to start planning some events together once it is safe to do so.

Board of Ushers

- Our 12 usher teams are still in place with ushers assigned to early and late services. All of our head ushers are assigning one usher to be in attendance at each service and are still responsible for their assigned months. We are ready to assume full usher responsibility's with full usher teams when Pastor Kruger and Board of Elders decide that is possible.
- We continue to provide ushers for funerals and whenever needed. We pray for this pandemic to end soon and be able to resume normal activities.

Board of Stewardship

- We thank Dana Koester for her many years of service to the stewardship committee. She is "retiring" from her volunteer job at St. Paul. Dana and Katherine Bode will help the new person get started to take Dana's place.
- We are very happy to see that our members are dedicated to continuing the work that we do as a congregation. A big thank you to everyone for continuing to support St Paul with your offerings. As Pastor Krueger has said, "We have been blessed so that we can be a blessing to others."
- During the pandemic, Ray Fleischhauer, Don Savage, Alan Rogers and Gene Bode have continued processing all offerings.
- We are in the process of assisting 3 church work students with scholarships through the Endowment Fund.
- We also have helped with several mission work things in the Texas District. Both locally and across the state.
- 2021 Offering envelopes will be distributed soon. If you do not wish to utilize them, please let the church office know.

Albers Memorial Committee

- Ordered signs (Fast Signs) for placement above both entrance doors to the Family Center. Signs are ready to be picked up and brought to St. Paul for installation.
- Ordered and received 4 sample chairs in various colors and patterned fabrics and frames. Selected chair with Navy Blue fabric and brushed silver frame to order for Family Center. Quantity of chairs to be ordered will be determined.
- Discussion at September Board of Directors Meeting to re-cover the fabric on the sound boards in the Family Center. Suggestion that they be re-covered in the same color family as the selected chair fabric.
- Plaque to re-dedicate Family Center as Albers Family Life Center to hang outside entrance from church offices area is in the works. Waiting for picture of Pastor and Mrs. Albers from family.
- A list of those serving on this committee is available through the church office.

Special Election to be held on Sunday, November 15, 2020

As we are all aware, the COVID-19 pandemic has altered many aspects of our lives in 2020. One of the matters disrupted at St. Paul was the election of congregation officers. The Nominating Committee met and has established a procedure (outlined below) for conducting officer elections on Sunday, November 15. The nominating committee will implement election controls so that all voting will remain anonymous and accountable.

Pertinent Dates and Procedures for the November 15, 2020 St. Paul Lutheran Church Officer Elections

- **October 19-30, 2020** – Mail in ballot requests need to be made with the church office. These shall be made to Cindy Byrd by phone, 254-799-3211 or email (wecare@splcwaco.com).
- **October 25, 2020** – Nominating Committee will announce to congregation status of nominations and make final ask for any further nominations from congregation members, due to committee by Nov. 1.
- **November 1, 2020** – Deadline for congregation members to submit additional nominees. Nominating Committee finalizes the ballot for election.
- **November 2, 2020** – Ballots are mailed to those who requested mail in ballots. *(NOTE: These ballots must be returned to the church office to be received no later than November 13. These may be mailed or deposited in the church mail slot.)*
- **November 8, 2020** – Officer nominees are introduced to the congregation at both worship services.
- **November 13, 2020** – Mail in ballots must be received in the church office by this date.
- **November 15, 2020, 8:00 am – 12:15 pm** - Ballots are cast and collected at both morning worship services. Ballots are cast and collected between services and after late service until 12:15 pm at drive thru voting. Nominating committee tallies the election results from all ballots.

If you have any questions regarding this process, you may contact any member of the Nominating committee (a list of those serving on this committee is available through the church office).



**“The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them;
He delivers them from all their troubles.” Psalm 34:17**

Lord, Hear Our Prayers:

- † We pray for continued healing for all those who have suffered physical problems in the last month, including: (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord lay His healing hand upon them.
- † We pray for all who struggle with ongoing health concerns, including: (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord keep His healing hand upon them.
- † We pray for all who are home-bound, in nursing care or assisted living facilities, including: (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord give them comfort and peace with their living situation.
- † We pray for those who have lost loved ones in the last month; including: (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord give them comfort in their time of sorrow.
- † We pray for all those affected by natural disasters in our country recently; those dealing with the wild fires, and those recovering from the damage left behind by recent hurricanes.
- † We pray for the patience and continued health of teachers, staff and students as they meet on campus with new education and safety guidelines amid Coronavirus (COVID-19).
- † We pray for all nations as the battle to combat Coronavirus (COVID-19) continues. We pray for world leaders, healthcare workers, public service workers, and all those who have been affected by this disease. We pray for healing, patience, and calmness during this time of uncertainty.
- † We pray for those serving in our Armed Forces (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord keep them safe in their stead as they defend our freedom and safety.
- † We pray for those serving in the mission field ... may God continue to bless and keep them safe as they minister to the world as an extended outreach of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Waco, Texas.

Please contact the church office if you, someone in your family, or a family friend is in need of prayer. Please keep the church office advised of the status of those you add to the prayer list, so that our list remains up-to-date. If you have any questions, please contact the church office at 254.799.3211 or by email to: wecare@splcwaco.com.

How can we Pray for you?

As the congregation was made aware in a letter distributed from Pastor Hardaway on October 20, Pastor Hardaway resigned his call as Associate Pastor to St. Paul Lutheran Church effective November 1, 2020. *(The contents of that letter are reprinted below for those who may not have seen the previous communication.)* We pray God's blessings on Pastor Hardaway and his family as they move forward during this time.

***"May the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding,
guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus"
(Philippians 4:7)***

October 20, 2020

To the Saints at Saint Paul,

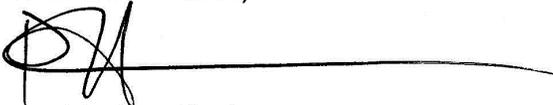
My time in ministry has been the most fulfilling vocation outside of being a father I have ever had. The people here at Saint Paul are amazing and your love and support of myself and my family has been tremendous.

My personal life has been very difficult for a variety of reasons of the past few years, ranging from Eliana's concussion and tumor, my own surgery and the stress of dealing with years of grief. For this reason, I feel the need to step down from my call as pastor in order to take some time to focus on myself and family. My last Sunday as pastor at St. Paul will be November 1, 2020.

The following days, weeks, and months will be challenging for my family and for y'all. I covet your prayers for them and promise my continued prayers for y'all.

Soli Deo Gloria

With Christ's Love,



Matthew David Hardaway

Fall Back

SUNDAY, November 1, 2020



Annual Thanksgiving Collection

Each year, during our Thanksgiving Eve Worship, we collect food items to share with those in our community that are less fortunate than ourselves. We are continuing our partnership with the LaVega Primary and Elementary Schools to help feed families and students in our immediate community. We will also be collecting warm winter coats for students in these schools. Please join us in helping to meet the needs of families in our community.

Donations will be collected beginning Sunday, November 22, and during both of our Thanksgiving Eve Worship services on November 25, but may be dropped off any time during office hours that week.

INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS:

- pop tarts
- cheese cracker packs
- fruit snacks
- cereal (individual sizes 1oz)
- fruit cocktail individual cups
- cans of soup
- pudding snack cups
- boxes of macaroni

WINTER CLOTHING DONATIONS FOR LAVEGA SCHOOL CHILDREN:

New or Gently used coats for children grades 5 and below.

Sizes especially needed are children's 3T to size 6.



"If you pour out yourself for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom shall be as the noonday."

Isaiah 58:10

Pastor Krueger continued:

“The reasonable question has been put whether it is better to have a good and imprudent ruler or a prudent but personally bad one. Moses here (*Ref. Dt. 1:13-16*) certainly calls for both: a good and prudent ruler. However, if both qualifications cannot be had, a prudent ruler who is not personally good is better than one who is not prudent, because a good one rules nothing but is only ruled—and only by the worst of people. Even though a prudent but personally bad ruler may harm the good people, he nevertheless rules the evil ones at the same time; and this is more necessary and proper for the world, since the world is nothing but a mass of evil people.”

These thoughts are one pastor’s and Martin Luther’s opinions for your consideration. Meanwhile, continue to pray for God to lead our country as we elect our governing officials and then to guide those elected to lead in a manner that seeks the good of the people. Above all and in all, pray that the Gospel may not be bound, but have free course and be preached to the joy and edification of God’s people.

Love God and love your neighbor,
Pastor Krueger

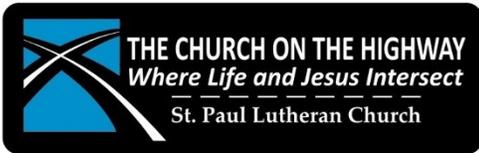
A vertical poster for Thanksgiving Eve Worship. The background is a textured, light brown paper. The text is centered and reads: "Please join us for our Thanksgiving Eve Worship". The date and times are listed below: "Wednesday, Nov. 25, 2020" and "12:00 p.m. & 6:30 p.m.". The poster is decorated with vertical stripes of green, orange, and brown on the left and right sides. At the bottom, there is a decorative border featuring autumn leaves, a cornucopia, and a pumpkin.

Please join us for our

*Thanksgiving
Eve
Worship*

Wednesday, Nov. 25, 2020

12:00 p.m. & 6:30 p.m.



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www.splcwaco.com

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**Live-stream Worship on Sunday
mornings at 10:30 a.m.
at www.splcwaco.com or
on Facebook ([StPaulWaco](https://www.facebook.com/StPaulWaco)).**

(Archived copies of Sunday morning worship
are available on the web site.)