

2018

Annual Report



St. Paul Lutheran Church ELCA

Reading, Ohio

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St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church

2018 Annual Report

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A Prayer for Meetings

ELW

Almighty God, you have built your church upon the foundation of apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. Grant that the people of this congregation may be joined together as a holy temple, a place where you dwell. Send your Holy Spirit upon us that, guided by your word and strengthened by your sacraments, we may plan and do things that will be for the good of your church and the glory of your name; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Pastor's Report

Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.
For darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;
but the LORD will arise upon you,
and his glory will appear over you.
Nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.
Lift up your eyes and look around;
they all gather together, they come to you;
your sons shall come from far away,
and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.
Then you shall see and be radiant;
your heart shall thrill and rejoice. (*Isaiah 60:1-5a*)

Dear People of God at St. Paul's:

You are radiant. You shine with the light of Christ. As we reflect on God's goodness to us in 2018 and look forward to 2019 with eager anticipation, one thing is clear: Christ shines brightly through you and so we have experienced great abundance.

To be sure, we know there is darkness in the world and in this last year, we have seen it around us and known it ourselves in various forms. But God has overcome that darkness time and time again through you. We have known the darkness of grief at the death and † *Burial* † of our loved ones, † Charlotte Langefeld, Merle Buck, Mary Jane Flege, Edna Willet, Pat Mohrfield, and Jim Forst †, but through His Word, God kindled our trust in him that they live, and we will be with them together again. God flooded the darkness with his light by stirring in Terri DeAngelis to offer a Bereavement Retreat and an on-going Bereavement Support Group. As God's light has arisen in Christ for all people, you rose to the occasion when faced with challenges, for the glory of the Lord shone through you as you comforted one another in grief, and as you visited one another when sisters or brothers were hospitalized or in hospice. When members went

through financial difficulty or health problems, you gave them a tangible experience of God's love by providing for them and by being God's presence through your prayers and genuine love. You have let Christ's light burn brightly for our young adults by sending them to the National Youth Gathering in June, and for our children by providing Sunday School as well as the nursery and activity time during worship. You've encouraged their lights to burn brightly by enthusiastically supporting Youth Nights and children and youth serving in worship. You launched Family Nights as a way to nurture our young people's faith through Bible study, worship, service opportunities, and intergenerational relationships so that they know beyond a doubt that there is a whole community who will be there for them when they are in need. You've fanned the flame within your sisters and brothers by participating in and asking for Bible studies on Heaven and Hell and the Book of Revelation. The Lord's hand is definitely upon you; God's own abundant generosity is visible in all of you through your faithful stewardship throughout the year and particularly through your commitment to see the Capital Campaign fully funded. The windows and doors for the parsonage, new boiler, and organ project aren't just investments in the property God gave you; they are investments in the Gospel, for you have sought to ensure that the Gospel may be proclaimed from this place and in this neighborhood for many years to come.

The light that God shines through you has had far-reaching effects. God promises above in Isaiah 60 "the nations shall come to you and kings to the brightness of your dawn." Your welcoming nature, willingness to adopt new family members, and commitment to caring for those in need is what makes a one-time visit become many visits, visitors become members, and new members become family. We rejoice at the arrival of † Dottie Deloatch, Jeanne Fuller, Susan Harris, Elain and Joe Heskamp, Nick Huitger, Stan and Betty Kline, Chet Laine, David and Emily Nutt, Betty Pack, Tom Pyle, Anne Rolfes, and Bernadette Zinnecker † through † *Affirmation of Baptism* † and thank God for the light that shines so brightly in all of them. You've reflected God's open welcome by welcoming visitors on Sunday mornings and to community breakfasts, new actors into the St. Paul Players productions, Reading families at the High School Choir Concerts, volunteers of Healthy Visions mentoring program, the Boy Scouts, and

all who came for the St. Paul Players' Productions, Easter Egg Hunt, Fall Festival, Ice Cream Social, and Live Nativity. The ecumenical partnership with Reading Council of Churches, and your hospitality of hosting the Vacation Bible School this last summer, introduced many children to Jesus for the first time and infused with even more light the faith of those who already knew Jesus. It is just as God promised: "they all gather together, they come to you" and you have embraced them with open arms, just like Christ.

I thank God for each of you and for the gift it is to share in the life of faith together as we seek to help others know Jesus.

You can see from all this above that this last year, we've invested a lot of time and energy in caring for each other, the ministries, and the property that God has entrusted to us. All of this is important work, necessary in a congregation. Most important of all is the commitment to continually seek the Triune God in worship, Bible study, and service, for relationship with the Trinity is the whole point of life! We must know Jesus and let him draw us deeper if we are to take seriously our mission statement to help others know Jesus. This new year, in order to prioritize this depth, we will continue to focus on nurturing each other, fanning each other's flames as we seek Christ in Scripture, our neighbors, and in one another. We also need to continue to develop systems for training, acclimating, and nurturing newer and long-time members in using Spirit-given gifts so that the light which shines within you is never threatened by burn-out, but instead is constantly fueled by the lights of each other and by Christ, who is the source of our light and life. You will see these commitments reflected in the goals of many of the committees in these reports. These structural/organizational projects prepare us to fully embrace new members and those who don't yet know Jesus, and also will help us to more fully embrace each other. While we have responsibility for each other and for this place God has given us and God created the church to nurture the faith of believers, it is also the purpose of the church to witness to those who don't know Christ. We seek balance in these two directions. We often hold Isaiah's perspective and wait for people to "come" to us—our building, events, and worship—but Isaiah also speaks to those who don't know Jesus, and promises that light will come to them. As we begin 2019,

“lift up your eyes and look around” not only for clues as to how God is asking us to shine in new ways for each other, but especially for how God is dispelling darkness by sending us out to be his light for and to receive his light from our neighbors.

Thrill and rejoice for God’s abundance; you are indeed radiant, Beloved.

In Christ,
Pastor Emily Beckering

Music Director’s Report

As I was starting to draft this report, I found myself musing about an incident in church nearly 60 years ago which has apparently scarred me for life. A high-school chum attended the same church; I was getting more involved – singing in the choir and substituting at the organ – but I noticed my friend was drifting away. I asked why and was startled to hear: “Church is just so boring; even studying is more fun.” With the perspective allowed by the intervening decades, I can look back now and agree with my old friend: Worship at that time and in that place was boring. At the time, the best I could do was to suggest that he “tough it out.” But I suppose that I suspected even then that he was correct and I somehow knew that this was not the way the Lord wanted worship to be.

Whatever accusations can be honestly hurled at worship at St. Paul’s, “boring” is most certainly not one of them. I’ve heard parishioners lightheartedly (I think!) remark that they go to the Church of Perpetual Change. Certainly, the Worship Committee and the Sacristan (What a blessing Janet is!) do their best to keep St. Paul’s worship visually, liturgically, and musically fresh.

As your Music Director, it is the last of these I’d like to discuss for a moment or two: Musical settings of the liturgy have existed in great number throughout the life of the church – extending back even into Old Testament times. In every era, some sons and daughters of the Church have felt called to offer their talents as composers for use in the liturgy: Hymns, Mass settings, canticles, psalm settings, instrumental works, cantatas, and anthems are most conspicuous among their offerings. Many (even well-known) composers reserved their best work

(nowadays sadly becoming obscure) for the Church: Not only Mozart, Schubert, Mendelssohn, and Beethoven, but Arthur Sullivan, Tschaikowsky, Rachmaninoff, Bruckner, Poulenc, Sibelius, Ralph Vaughan Williams, and Charles Ives. Some composers manage to bridge the chasm between the cathedral and “tin pan alley” (Andrew Lloyd Webber and Bill Gaither, to cite two extremes, come to mind). Modern composers who devote themselves entirely to the Church tend to live and die in obscurity, despite compositional quality (and sometimes quantity) which would overwhelm their contemporaries who reaped great wealth on Broadway and in Hollywood: Healey Willan, Richard Hillert, Carl Schalk, Ronald Nelson, Mark Sedio, Paul Manz, Tillis Butler, Calvin Hampton, James M. Capers, Garry Cornell, David Haas, James Harris, Richard Proulx, Jay Beech, John Ylvisaker, Dale Wood, Ronald Arnatt, and Jeremy Young. (If you can accurately identify more than three in this last list, Barry will take you to lunch after church some Sunday very soon.) But almost everyone who reads these words holds tunes of these “obscure” composers in their hearts. These are the “cream of the crop,” the best of the best, the folk who wrote the music we sing Sunday after Sunday.

(If you haven’t figured out how to claim your free lunch by this point, you are disqualified if you have to read further.)

I am told that there are congregations who make do with only a single liturgical setting, which they sing every Sunday of the year. (I have not encountered one since the early 1980’s – and I do get around.) There are quite a number who “rotate” between a couple or three settings in the course of a year. And good for them!

At St. Paul’s the “rotation” (at least for the last decade or so) has been for the appearance of six different settings, which support seven seasons (one setting appears twice). In the order of the Liturgical Year:

Advent: Holy Communion by **Ronald A. Nelson** (LBW, Setting II)

Christmas: Special service(s) of carols taking the place of the liturgy

After Christmas thru Epiphanytide: Holy Communion by **Garry Cornell** (Augsburg Press)

Lent: Deutsche Messe, D. 782, by **Franz Schubert** (1817)

Eastertide: Bread of Life, (Holy Communion, Setting 5, in With One Voice) by **Jeremy Young**

Whitsuntide: Holy Communion by **Richard W. Hillert** (LBW, Setting I)

Summer (St. Mary Magdalene to St. Michael): Deutsche Messe, D. 782, by **Franz Schubert** (1817)

Fall (Michaelmastide): Holy Communion by **Larry Olson, Dennis Carper, Robin Cain and Jay Beech** (ELW Setting VIII).

Some observations: This list is impressive both in variety and in temporal scope. The oldest setting (Schubert) is now more than 200 years old; yet it seems to be the most popular setting of all, if one were to judge by the enthusiasm of congregational singing. The other “most favored” setting, judging by congregational comments, is the newest, ELW-VIII.

As your music director, I think it is time (past time?) to “shake things up a bit.” As much as I am an enthusiastic proponent of our present rotation (and, quite frankly, the envy of many of my Organist/Choirmaster colleagues who endure only a few settings, week after week), I do think it is time for us to make a couple of changes. Missing in our rotation is any acknowledgement of our jazz heritage – owed mostly to our African-American brethren. Although our congregation is not presently blessed with substantial African-American numbers, we all have a heritage of that musical tradition and hymnody. For many of us, that extends back to childhood. (I’ve known “Go, Tell It on the Mountain,” “Were You There?” and “Deep River” since before I could read and so, I would guess, have many of you.)

I believe it is time to add one of the high-quality “jazz-Mass” settings of the Lutheran liturgy to our rotation. Most of these are by Afro-American composers

and most of these composers are devout American Lutherans. Prominent examples include the “Chicago Jazz Mass” and the “Detroit Jazz Mass.” There are many others and quality varies. I plan, early in the year, to add to the burdens of the Worship & Music Committee by asking that they study the alternatives and make a selection to be included in the congregation’s regular rotation.

Adding such a setting also would provide opportunity for additional instrumentalists’ involvement, even including percussionists.

As is noted elsewhere, I am sure, in these annual reports, this has been, very sadly, a big year for necrology. Heaven must be getting crowded, for we have sent so many of our best there during the year just ended. We try to avoid these references in the annual music report, but the loss of Charlotte Langefeld requires an exception. Charlotte was a fellow church musician, organist, choir director, who spent most of her life in the service of the Lord. She served many congregations in various capacities, but eventually settled in as Organist and Choirmaster at the Norwood English Lutheran Church, from which she retired before coming to St. Paul’s. Even in advanced age, she blessed us by serving as a substitute organist here. And at her death, she blessed us again with the gift of her new Clavinova instrument, which we use regularly in worship and (even more often) in rehearsals.

We look forward to growing the music program in 2019. St. Paul’s has a rich, one might even say “an astonishing,” history as a musical parish. We seek to continue the congregation’s rich vocal (choir, ensembles) and instrumental (orchestra, chamber orchestra, ensembles) traditions. St. Paul’s has set a high standard for musical performance since before the American Civil War. Despite the severe financial difficulties for members and for the congregation in the late decades of the 19th century, musical (and worship!) standards remained high. As we seek to pass this heritage along, we eagerly seek the assistance of all who would like to help with the program.

In 2019 we hope to expand small-group instrumental ensembles – but we are limited only by the number of volunteers who are willing to step forward.

We hope to revitalize the handbell choir. The most important missing component is additional volunteers to play.

2018 also brought news that the long-contemplated organ repair/renewal project might finally come to fruition. Thanks to several substantial, anonymous donations in late 2018, funds were raised that allowed a contract to be signed with Muller Organ Company for the rebuilding of our instrument. We are not yet aware of the scheduling of work.

As our project needs to be scheduled in among much larger projects in the Muller shop, we await “opportunistic” scheduling, which we hope to be soon in the new year.

The music program at St. Paul’s continues to benefit from extensive congregational participation and support. About two dozen adults are actively involved in the congregation's vocal and instrumental music programs; this is a substantial portion of typical adult worship attendance and represents a level of participation to which most other congregations of our size can only aspire.

At St. Paul’s, we are fortunate to have Carolyn Koehl – accomplished organist and choir director and, as not many are aware, experienced teacher of elementary music. Carolyn devoted many years to the musical instruction of children in the Sycamore public school system; they were blessed. Carolyn runs our “youth choir” program, at which she has done a noteworthy job for several years. This past fall, when Carolyn was unexpectedly sidelined by injury, I had the wonderful experience of trying to fill her shoes for a few weeks. Oh, my. I encountered an enthusiastic group of youngsters and equally enthusiastic adult volunteers. In contemplative retrospect, I am not completely sure what we were able to accomplish, but, at the time, it was glorious! We practiced, we sang, we marched around, we learned the organ and how it works, we learned how to play handbells, we learned how to march in (and sit quietly with!!!) the chancel choir, and we learned how to sing the Graduals – maybe hesitantly, but eventually ever so well! My thanks especially to Sarah Papin for her help with this choir, and to Maci and Matthew Lawson, to Donny, Alanna and Teagan Cathcart, to Katie,

Bea, and Lucy Sturgill, and particularly to Linda Lawson, Donny and Bridget Cathcart, and Bess Sturgill for many, many quiet gifts and blessings.

St. Paul's has had for many years an orchestra under the direction of Jack Wagner which supports our annual outdoor worship at Baxter Park. Smaller groups drawn from the orchestra play on Reformation, Christmas, Easter, and other occasions. During 2018, the congregation has benefited once again from the musical talents of Nancy Erbeck and Eleanor Bardes on the flute; from Eric Bardes on the oboe; from Karen Koehl and Jack Wagner on the clarinet – and Jack Wagner on the bass clarinet as well; from Nick Huitger on bassoon – and occasionally on flute and piccolo as well; from Carolyn Koehl on the horn; from Lew Stephens on the euphonium, from Holly Ford on trombone; from Mary Wagner on violin; and from Susan Bardes and Joyce Seals on 'cello.

Our Chancel Choir sings most Sundays during the “choir year” which extends from September through the church picnic in June, as well as supporting the various weekday services during Lent. During 2018, we were fortunate to have the talents of sopranos Olivia Hedges, Kathy Hirt, Chelsea King, Carolyn Koehl, and Cindy Sieckman; altos Susan Bardes, Sherry Bronner, Pat Coldiron, Chiron Harris, & Mary Wagner, tenors Cindy Mayhugh, Sarah Papin & David Hill, and basses Rick Hedges, Jim Sturgill, & Jack Wagner.

Barry Prince

Committee Reports

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

As we reported at the end of 2017, the committee started the campaign with a total of eight (8) projects: the purchase of a new TV/Monitor; a new video camera; installation of a fence around the backyard of the parsonage; updating of the organ; replacement of the church main boiler; replacement of all the windows and doors in the church parsonage; updating of the sanctuary chandelier light bulbs with LED bulbs; painting of both the Sanctuary and Narthex walls; replacement of the carpet in the Sanctuary; and finally, updating and replacement of portions of the landscaping around the outside of the church. The total estimated cost of all these projects was \$137,000.00.

At the close of 2017, the committee completed the installation of the fence and had in place the new video camera along with the new TV/Presentation Monitor, which were donated by a member of the congregation. In 2018 we completed the installation of the replacement windows and doors in the parsonages, installed the LED lights in the sanctuary and replaced the main boiler along with updating all the thermostats in the church that allow for the temperature to be monitored and adjusted remotely. We started the final project, the modifications to the organ. This project was approved by the committee and by the Council in November of this year; as of late November, we entered into a contract with Muller Pipe Organ Company. The first phase of the project is due to be started in the first quarter of 2019. Additional phases of the project (some will be visible, some will not) will be conducted throughout the year. We will be reporting on this project throughout the year.

This will conclude the first grouping of the Improvement Committee projects. The remaining projects under consideration, like the painting of the Narthex and Sanctuary, replacing the carpet in the sanctuary, and updating the landscaping, and others under consideration, are on hold right now.

If you have any questions on the projects, please address your questions directly to Mark Lohmeier, he is the Campaign Committee Chairperson and he has all the information for these projects.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Lohmeier

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Committee members include: Shirley Lathrop and Bess Sturgill (co-chairs), Donald Harris (Council Liaison), Nancy Erbeck, Jane Erbeck, Diana Hawkins, Chelsea King, Joyce McDowell, and Pastor Emily Beckering.

What a productive year it was for Christian Education! One of our biggest projects was sending our youth to the ELCA National Youth Gathering in Texas. Thank you all for supporting our young adults' fundraisers so enthusiastically,

and especially to Marie Calhoun who coordinated both the Reformation Sunday and Easter Breakfast meals for our fundraisers.

We also added chapel and weekly take-home challenges to Sunday School curriculum, making for a more rounded and involved study time. Nancy Erbeck, Sarah Papin, and Donald Harris served as the primary Sunday School teachers. A special thank you to Sarah Papin for leading chapel time, to Joyce McDowell for designing the learning activities for children during worship, and to all who volunteer as Sunday School Assistants and as staff of Activity Time and the nursery during worship: John, Jeni, and Bridget Cathcart, Kim Coulehan, Jane Erbeck, Chrissy Harris, Shirley Harbaugh, Steve Headley, Penny Huber, Chelsea King, Shirley Lathrop, Linda Lawson, Maggie and Joyce McDowell, Jim and Bess Sturgill. We have continued to have the monthly breakfast with the leadership of the Hedges and Sturgill families. Thank you, Maci and Linda Lawson, for doing dishes! We also wrote and adopted a Child and Youth Abuse Prevention Policy to safeguard our children and volunteers against abuse.

What an awesome time we had with the Vacation Bible School, for the first time in 8 years, with Reading Council of Churches. There were 28 volunteers! Many of those saints listed in the paragraph above also helped to lead VBS. In addition, we'd also like to thank: Susan Bardes (crafts were so organized and kid-accessible thanks to you!), Sherry Bronner, Ian, Patrick, and Donny Cathcart, Leandra Hawkins—all of whom led small groups and connected with the kids), Dottie Deloatch (for being our nurse, organizing paperwork, and being the “warm welcome” families received), Linda Miller (for taking the chaos of lunches and snacks and turning it into a well-oiled, delicious machine), Marie Calhoun (for planning the BBQ bash), Carole Replogle (Wild Games were a blast!), and Jane Owen whose brilliance at coordinating registration and publicity made VBS popular.

We began experimenting with Family Nights to deepen relationships with God and across generations, growing in faith, and serving together; also, our youth have led and taught several of our youth nights.

Bible study series were held on Heaven and Hell and the Book of Revelation.

Looking to 2019, we want to review curriculum programs for purchase that we might use starting fall of 2019 and create job descriptions for Christian Ed. Committee members and Sunday School/Nursery volunteers, so that members who serve in these capacities now and in the future feel equipped with reasonable expectations for their work. We also are looking to participate in the Southern Ohio Synod of the ELCA youth retreat at Camp Kern in April.

In this past year we have seen the youth take bold steps to show their faith. We are working to keep that trend in 2019.

Respectfully submitted,
Donald Harris

DRAMA MINISTRY (ST. PAUL PLAYERS)

For the year 2018

The Drama Ministry continues to grow: This is the first year we have had Sponsors for all our productions. We extend a big “thank you” to **St. John United Church of Christ** for sponsoring ***The Lower Room*** by Pat Wooley: A look at Jesus’ last day through the eyes of the women surrounding Jesus and His disciples. To have a little fun with the show, we went with a 1980’s costuming look. I would like to thank the Cast and Crew of this production: Carroll B. Mayhugh Jr., David Hill, Donald Harris, Nick Huitger, Marie Calhoun, Steve Huitger, **Kim Coulehan**, and Nate Huitger worked as the Crew; Jennifer Pence, Hazel Mersch, David Hill, Sarah Papin, Sherry Bronner, **Jasmine Brown, Briana Mitchell**, Carroll B. Mayhugh Jr., Chison Harris, Chris Schingledecker, **Gretchen Schultz**, and **Aubriana Mitchell** appeared in the cast (names in bold type are new to St. Paul Players). Expenses for the show were \$779.00, while donations, advertising revenue, sponsorships and ticket sales brought in \$1,637.50, leaving a balance of \$858.50 in the black.

Next came the summer production. *Mary Ainslee*, a charming and gracious little lady, is a tradition in her little New England village. She never leaves her house and every night a lamp burns in her attic window. As an accommodation to her neighbor, Miss Ainslee agrees to take in her neighbor's young niece, Ruth and they become warm friends. Carl Winsfield, young newspaper reporter with eye

trouble, comes to the village. Carl falls a victim to Miss Ainslee's charm and falls in love with Ruth. They become engaged. Carl has an accident which causes him to lose his eyesight. It is then that Miss Ainslee steps forth and fights heroically to help Carl regain his lost vision. A big "Thank You" to **Jack and Mary Wagner** for their sponsorship of **Lavender and Old Lace**. Also we thank the Crew: Carroll B. Mayhugh Jr., Sherry Bronner, Cindy Mayhugh, Linda Miller, and Steve Huitger. And many thanks to the Cast: Sarah Papin, David Hill, **Mary Benken, Sonnia Richards**, Michelle Cockerham, Chris Schingledecker, Nate Huitger, Randy Blake, Rachel Thorman, Kimberly Coulehan, and Dennis Eling. The financial break-down of the show was \$1576.61 in expenses and income (Donations, Advertising, Sponsorship, and Ticket Sales) of \$3,009.50, leaving a balance of \$1,432.89 in the black.

Also this summer we had some work done to the stage, as it was badly in need of repair after a decade of heavy use. So the St. Paul Players team did some fundraisers: First, a luncheon and a raffle on June 3rd raised \$974.00; then in September a "Murder Mystery Luncheon" raised \$475.00. Total expense for lumber and materials to rebuild the stage was \$2026.61, leaving a shortfall of - \$577.61. Thanks in particular to Brent Hutzel, a neighboring professional carpenter, to Nick and Nate Huitger, to Nick's dad, Steve Huitger, for donating their time and services, and to everyone else who helped to make this possible. I forgot to write the names down, so I won't try to go by memory.

We closed our 2018 season with **The Christmas Express** by Pat Cook. "This is the most hopeless place in the world!" Hilda intones as she and Satch, her assistant, argue over what time it is. She dreams of faraway places and only finds tedium in running diminishing activity of the Holly Railway Station. Diminishing, that is, until Leo Tannenbaum drops in out of nowhere the day before Christmas Eve. Suddenly, an old radio that hasn't worked in years springs to life, the local group of carolers (which usually yowls like a gang of wet cats) begins to sound like a professional choir and the whole town gets the Christmas spirit. Coincidence? Or does Leo have something to do with all this? Even Satch changes his tune when it appears that Leo might be "on the run." This nostalgic theatrical greeting card is full of eccentric small-town characters, wise-cracking their way

to finding the true wonder of Christmas. And on the way, they make us all wish we could take a ride on ***The Christmas Express***. Thanks to **Cindy and Carroll Mayhugh** for sponsoring this production. Thanks to the Cast and Crew for their hard work getting it together. The Cast: Sherry Bronner, Nate Huitger, **Darchelle Derthick**, Owen Kelm, **Molly Simons**, Carroll B. Mayhugh Jr., Mary Benken, Sarah Papin, David Hill, Kim Coulehan. The Crew was Barry Prince, Nick Huitger, Donald Harris, Linda Miller, and Steve Huitger. The financial breakdown of the show was Expenses of \$1447.05 and Receipts (Donations, Advertising, Sponsorship, and Ticket Sales) of \$2,055.00 leaving a balance of \$607.95 in the black.

God has been very good this year to St. Paul Players, as He has brought us some fine new actors and returned some veterans to our stage, even while keeping us financially solvent. We would also like to thank the Congregation for always supporting the ministry, both with a fine facility (complete with heat and lights and air conditioning in the summer!) and with the help of additional volunteers when we've asked. And we express a big thanks to Pastor Emily who came downstairs to pray with St. Paul Players often and it helped.

2019 Season for St. Paul Players

March

McKenna's Choice by Ev Miller

Directed by Nick Huitger

Sponsored by Jack and Mary Wagner

July

Cocktails with Mimi by Mary Chase (*Harvey*)

Directed by Barry Prince

Sponsored (If you would like to sponsor please see David Hill)

October

The Unexpected Guest by Agatha Christie

Directed by Mary Benken

Sponsored (If you would like to sponsor please see David Hill)

December

Happy Hollandaise! by Tim Koenig

Directed by Randy Blake

Sponsored (If you would like to sponsor please see David Hill)

Again I would like to thank everyone who helped in many ways to make my life easier again this year; many hands make light work and each year the Lord sends more people to help grow the Drama Ministry. Thanks be to God.

Thank you all and God Bless.

David Hill
St. Paul Players

EVANGELISM COMMITTEE

2018 Year in Review

1. Publicity – update and keep current St. Paul’s website and Facebook accounts. This is done with the help of Jane Owen, a partnership that has helped our committee immensely.
2. Update electronic community calendars with our events. We send out flyers, posters, emails and signs to the community to make sure our events are known throughout the local area.
3. Welcoming – we make sure that all visitors are welcomed providing welcome gifts with literature on the Lutheran Service for visitors. When a new member joins our congregation the Evangelism Committee sponsors the reception.
4. Engaging/Connecting – some examples from this year:
 - An Easter Egg Hunt after church on Easter
 - We hosted a reception for recent graduates in May
 - We sponsored a basic cooking class for the youth in our congregation (and anyone else who was interested in joining Marie Calhoun in the kitchen)
 - Reception for new members in June
 - Ice Cream Social for our members in July

5. Outreach Community Events:

- A Community Easter Egg Hunt in April
- A Float in the Reading Memorial Day Parade – we partnered with the Youth Group for a very successful opportunity to hand out flyers about our church along with candy for the kids, not to mention decorating the float and walking in the parade.
- A Community Ice Cream Social in July
- A Fall Festival Costume Party in October
- A Live Nativity in December

Evangelism Goals for 2019

Increase congregational membership and worship attendance through increasing congregational connections and increasing our community presence. This year we are reviewing ways to strengthen our connections within our church along with our Community Outreach in order to maximize our congregational strength and our presence in the community.

Thanks to all who have devoted their time and energy to these efforts throughout the year!

Diana Hawkins
Chairperson & Council Liaison

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Committee Activities

Members of the Finance Committee in 2018 included: Doug Lohmeier, Nancy Erbeck, Rick Hedges, Dennis King, Jim Miller, Linda Miller, Emily Nutt, and David Nutt. Pastor Beckering also participated as needed. The committee met quarterly in 2018.

Committee activities for 2018 included:

- Reducing expenses related to Bureau of Workers Compensation via participation in the Reading Chamber of Commerce and Hunter consulting group rate program.

- Closing the 5/3 savings account and transferring assets to a new Valley Central current expense account in order to achieve higher interest rates.
- Selling the Eli Lilly stocks (38) when stock rate increased by 25% for a short period of time.
- Revising policies and procedures related to Credit Cards, Debit Cards, and Expense Reimbursement.
- Signing contract with ADP to manage our employee payroll including tax payments and preparation of W2's and 1099's.

Review of Financial Status

Expenses

Committee chairs did an excellent job managing their budgets this year.

Income

Cash Assets and Liabilities Comparison Year over Year

Assets	12/31/17	12/31/18	Comments
5/3 Checking	\$72,673	\$42,813.36	
5/3 Savings	\$21,005	0	
Valley Central #3810	\$10,000	\$10,000.00	
Valley Central #5151	\$79,188	\$25,426.37	Boiler replacement
Valley Central #4314		\$54,650.26	
Scottrade/TD Ameritrade	\$15,609	\$25,948.68	TD Ameritrade purchased Scottrade
Eli Lilly Stock	\$3209	0	
Liabilities			
Master Card 6794	0	-\$375	
Master Card 6802	0	0	
Net Worth	\$201,684	\$158,463.67	

Respectfully submitted,
Linda C. Miller

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

In 2018 there were several property improvements to the church and Parsonage. New windows and doors were installed in the Parsonage. Another flat

screen TV and stand were donated also for the upstairs Media Room and Sunday School. Two more speakers were donated for the Carillon System and will be installed this year 2019. Installing them is the hard part.

The new boilers were installed with internet access to Thermostats to control all areas! Thanks again to Jim Miller.

A new electric door operator was installed in the West entrance. The old one did not have replacement parts available. Several other doors on the church were looked at 4 different times by two door companies and some progress has been made. But still finding Actual Qualified affordable door repair people is hard to do! It seems to be a lost art?

The stage was reinforced and greatly improved, and costs were paid for by Drama (St. Paul Players). The usual drains and pipes had to be repaired throughout the year. The gutters and downspouts on church and Sanctuary were cleaned also.

In 2019 we look to having the lighting on the large Cross on the East and the South side of the church repaired. The parking lot is to be patched, sealed, and re-stripped. Also the fellowship hall floor is to be cleaned and buffed in 2019.

We also now have an email address to send all property repair requests! It is property@stpaulreading.org. Please call me with anything urgent, and also email the request just so we can keep track of the items.

Respectfully submitted,
Dennis King

SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE

The Social Concerns Committee is charged with implementing charitable programs that impact our congregation, community, and the world. The Social Concerns Committee was chaired by Penny Huber with Marie Calhoun acting as Council liaison. Other members included Janet King, Shirley Harbaugh, and Kathy Hirt.

In 2018 St. Paul participated in many worthwhile projects. The following is a list of programs supported by the members of St. Paul.

Valley Interfaith Community Resource Center

Each month we contribute diapers, laundry detergent, paper towels, food items, etc. We average about 100 items per month. This summer we collected approximately 200 glue sticks for Valley Interfaith's back-to-school project and, in November, 190 cans of chicken noodle soup for Christmas baskets. We continued our winter donation of hats, scarves, and gloves/mittens. We thank Ron and Shirley Harbaugh for delivering all these items to Valley Interfaith.

Operation Christmas Child

This is a global effort to make a Christmas celebration possible for children around the world. This year we sponsored a bake sale in August to raise money for shipping the boxes. Thanks to our generous congregation, we were able to contribute \$300 for distributing our 86 shoeboxes. These boxes were filled with personal hygiene items, toys, books, and other supplies. Kathy Hirt spearheaded this project and delivered the boxes to the regional collection center.

Heifer International Project

The quarters collected during the year in our quarter tube are sent to Heifer International to end poverty and hunger in developing countries. This year we collected \$125, which will be used to purchase a pig. Pigs need little land and can thrive on garden scraps. An average sow will provide a family with up to 16 piglets a year.

Ronald McDonald House

Our congregation donated 20.1 pounds of pop can pull tabs and two shopping bags of personal care items to support temporary housing offered to non-local parents with children at Cincinnati Children's Hospital.

Matthew 25: Ministries

Thanks to Chelsea King for delivering many, many, many bags of empty pill bottles to Matthew 25. This donation serves two purposes: helping the poorest of the poor by providing a way to distribute medicine, and keeping thousands of

bottles out of landfills each year. Jane Erbeck has continued to crochet sleeping mats out of donated plastic grocery bags, to be used as ground covers to keep our homeless neighbors more dry and warm. In 2018 she has created 50 mats.

Reading Children

We accepted an invitation from the Reading Chamber of Commerce to join with them to help Reading City Schools by becoming a sponsor of Pints for Pencils at Redwine & Co. We were one of eight sponsors each giving \$250, and the event netted \$2,100. This allowed the Chamber to purchase 100 book bags and fill them with school supplies.

Dorcas Circle

The Dorcas ladies worked this year to complete 130 quilts for Lutheran World Relief. Each box was packed with a tracking number and we hope to learn where our quilts were sent.

If you would like to join us in making these quilts, you are welcome in the fellowship hall on the third Wednesday of every month, from 9 am to 2 pm. No sewing skills are required!

A Quilt Raffle was held, and quilts were won by Linda Lawson and Skip Rolfes. Proceeds from the raffle, \$430, were sent to LWR to help with shipping quilts to various parts of the world. Before packing the quilts, they were placed on the pews and received a blessing from the congregation. A huge thank-you to Linda Miller and Larry Huber for their hard work on the day the quilts were packed, and to Marty Lohmeier for helping Elinor deliver the quilts to the truck in Dayton. Thanks to everyone who donated fabric and sheets.

Good Samaritan Fund

We spent many hours working on the Fund distribution policy. It is the intention of this fund to empower all members of St. Paul's to see and to care for Christ in one another and in all our neighbors.

Emergency Food Bags

Janet King keeps Pastor Emily supplied with emergency bags of canned and boxed foods, which she distributes at her discretion.

Respectfully submitted,
Penny Huber

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

The Stewardship Committee was chaired by Elinor Schieman with Carole Replogle acting as the Council liaison. Other committee members included Pastor Emily Beckering, Holly Ford, Nelson Langefeld, and Pat Coldiron.

In June the committee met to plan the Fall Stewardship Drive. The biggest goal of the drive is to help members manage all of life with Christ at the center. To assist members in achieving this goal, the following items were provided: an Epistle article written by Nelson Langefeld on “The turtle only makes progress when he sticks his neck out”; biblical articles from Pastor Beckering on tithing; personal testimonies by members on how tithing affects their relationship with God; and letters from the Stewardship Committee. Also, members received written testimonials from different age groups explaining what being a member of St. Paul means to them. All these events were designed to help the congregation see how their time, talents, and gifts fund the mission of St. Paul.

On Stewardship Sunday the Estimate of Giving cards were collected to help St. Paul plan its 2019 budget and to advance St. Paul’s many ministries. The results of the fall stewardship drive were very encouraging: Thirty-two households returned estimate of giving cards, which is two more households than last year. It is noteworthy that eight households returned their card for the first time. Together, these two factors meant a 26.6% increase in returned cards! Additionally, eight households increased their estimate of giving over last year, which is a 25% increase! These numbers are indicators that the stewardship drive was a success. We thank everyone for whatever you give in Jesus' name that God's work might be done here through St. Paul's.

Each month during 2018 included events and activities to promote members awareness of their lives, thinking about “Mind, Body, and Spirit” while keeping Christ at the center of their lives. Activities included presentations by speakers on various health topics, chair volleyball, dance aerobics, financial workshops, and ways to help needy individuals and families.

We also encourage you to watch the pictures displayed on the smart-TV in the narthex each week to see ways we have and can respond to God's love. These slideshows show how everything we do as a congregation is stewardship!

It is the hope of the committee that each of these activities, events helped you grow in your relationship with God.

Future Projects

Each month during 2019 ten aspects of Stewardship will be considered, revolving around how to take care of our physical health, mental health, and emotional health.

In order to continue to live into our calling to raise up and equip the body of Christ for service in the world, and to connect stewardship with worship, you will notice that we will be praying for and blessing a number of committees and leaders during worship this year.

A “thermometer” will be drawn to show how progress is being made toward our goal for giving.

A Stewardship wheel with verses discussing Stewardship will be made.

The Stewardship theme will continue year-round and will relate to the scripture given on Stewardship Sunday.

Respectfully submitted,
Carole Replogle

WORSHIP AND MUSIC COMMITTEE

The Worship and Music committee was chaired by Linda Miller. Members included Janet King, David Hill, Barry Prince, Carroll Mayhugh, Sarah Papin,

Carole Replogle, Nick Huitger, and Rev. Emily Beckering. The committee met six times in 2018.

New this past year:

Nelson Langefeld donated a mint condition Clavinova in memory of Charlotte who passed away on Easter Sunday.

Attempts were made and are ongoing to decrease the length of the bulletins.

Attempts were made and are ongoing to decrease the length of the worship service.

Chrissy Harris agreed to manage/coordinate the music for the Carillon system.

Committee Activities

The Hymn Committee chose hymns for all worship services in 2018. Hymns selected were based on member requests and coordination with the scripture readings each week. Members included: Sherry Bronner, Carol Curless, Maryhelen West, Carole Replogle, Chelsea King, Carolyn Koehl, Rev. Emily Beckering, Barry Prince, and Linda Miller.

The Assisting Ministers group in 2018 included Doug Lohmeier, Terry McDowell, Nancy Erbeck, Leandra Hawkins, Donald Harris, and Carroll Mayhugh. David Hill filled in as assisting minister when the choir was on break for the summer. Nelson Langefeld will also serve in this capacity in 2019.

The Epiphany Service on January 6th was attended by 32 people.

Lent - Ash Wednesday was on February 14th and Wednesday evening Lenten services began on February 21st. Lenten services included Vespers, Compline, Drama (*The Lower Room*) and two Holden Evening Prayer services. Themed meals were offered prior to the Wednesday evening services. Services were held on Maundy Thursday (noon and 7 pm), Good Friday (noon and 7 pm), and the Easter Vigil on Saturday evening 3/31.

The Church Picnic was held at Baxter Park on June 10th. Thanks again to the Lohmeiers for providing us a perfect place to worship outdoors, and doing a terrific job grilling the food. Shirley Harbaugh provided her usual support in assuring we had the correct supplies.

A Lessons and Carols service was offered on Sunday, December 30th in place of the regular worship service and the lack of an available supply pastor.

Carole Replogle faithfully checked the suggestion box each month and passed along the suggestions to the appropriate person for follow up.

And finally, Janet King's efforts as the sacristan and coordinating the work of the Altar Guild are greatly appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda C. Miller

Children's Choir

In 2018 the 6-member Children's Choir learned about the Bible and stories from the Bible, prayers, and parts of the Lutheran service through songs and playing instruments to accompany each other. They participated in services at the time of the Children's Sermon and with the Chancel Choir in singing the Kyrie and hymns. They enjoyed participating in the Easter Vigil, reading lessons and being acolytes. They are learning various ways to participate and be active in the church services and other church activities.

Carolyn Koehl, Director

Parochial Report

Members received during 2018

by Baptism	0		
by Affirmation / Transfer	15	January 7	Emily Barr Dottie Deloatch Elain Heskamp Joe Heskamp Nick Huitger Betty Kline Stanley Kline David Nutt Tom Pyle Bernadette Zinnecker
		September 23	Jeanne Fuller Susan Harris Chet Laine Betty Pack Anne Rolfes
Total	15		

Membership losses during 2018

by Death	6	April 1	Charlotte Langefeld
		June 26	Merle Buck
		July 22	Mary Jane Flege
		July 26	Edna Willet
		September 5	Pat Mohrfield
		December 5	Jim Forst
by Transfer	0		
Total	6		

Average Worship Attendance

12/31/18: 81

12/31/17: 79

Total Membership

12/31/18: 222 members

12/31/17: 213 members