

2019

# Annual Report



St. Paul Lutheran Church ELCA

Reading, Ohio

January 26, 2020



# St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church

## 2019 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.

## Council President's Opening Remarks

### “GREETINGS”

Those of you who are in my age group know that an official letter containing this greeting was not good news. It usually indicated that you were now selected for military service (drafted) and your life was about to change. Well, dear friends, this greeting is GOOD NEWS! GOOD NEWS in that our church is in a wonderful position as we look forward to 2020.

GOOD NEWS in that each committee has a budget to work within and a Goal and Mission to fulfill and does not need Council approval to operate its day-to-day business.

GOOD NEWS in that we have loving and faithful people on all those committees, who toil endlessly to accomplish the best for our church. We also thank God for a dynamic Pastor that works tirelessly to bring love, encouragement, and support to all.

GOOD NEWS in that our finances are on a sound footing and, Lord willing, all of our financial problems are behind us. We are operating “in the black” and planning some new and exciting ventures in the near future.

GOOD NEWS in that St. Paul Players productions now draw great attendance and “rave reviews” from all who enjoy one of their performances. This outreach program is now drawing in new people who were not familiar with our church before.

GOOD NEWS in that our church's Goal and Mission is to reach out to the community with open arms and invite everyone into our “church family,” as Jesus would have us do. Several functions were held in the past years specifically for the community to enjoy and to show that St. Paul is here for them. This coming year will again offer such events.

GOOD NEWS in that our Church Council can now concentrate on planning and exploring new and exciting programs to further our Goal and Mission. This is GREAT NEWS, and with God's help and the Holy Spirit leading us, we will grow and prosper.

I encourage each of you to read all the reports that follow and to see for yourself how God has truly blessed us. St. Paul Lutheran Church has a bright and exciting future. PRAISE GOD.

Nelson Langefeld, Council President

## Pastor's Report

Dear People of God at St. Paul's:

In 2019, we have continued to make strides as a congregation in organizational functioning. St. Paul's Council has focused in this last year on developing materials to assist new members in acclimating to our congregation as well as on encouraging the committees to feel the freedom to do their work. We as a congregation are nearing the end of our Capital Campaign Projects, and so have taken good care of the buildings and organ entrusted to us. All the committees and groups in our congregation are functioning on a high level to accomplish their goals, and this is to your credit.

In the last six months, I have been approached by several different members who asked variations of the same questions:

- Are we ready now to turn our focus to our neighbors?
- When will we be equipped to be Christ and do the work of the Church?
- What can we do for Reading?
- How can we be more of a visible presence in Cincinnati?

These are wonderful questions; they make me proud of you all and very thankful to be your pastor because there is more to these questions than a desire to "get more members" in order to sustain ourselves. These questions are evidence of the stirring of the Holy Spirit among us, for they are characterized by a hunger to

serve and to live out our calling “for the sake of the world” rather than just for ourselves.

Make no mistake, we already do make efforts to serve our neighbors and reach outside our doors through Dorcas Circle’s quilts, Drama Ministry, and our partnerships initiated by our Social Concerns Committee with Valley Interfaith, the Reading Bridal District, and the Reading Community Schools. I hear, however, in these questions a desire to make a more profound impact, to form actual relationships with our neighbors, and to serve in a more hands-on way as opposed to collecting food or clothing items and sending them off to people we don’t meet.

Interestingly enough, it seems that the Reading Council of Churches is feeling the same stirring. In October, the Reading Council of Churches decided to shift our focus in 2020 from worshipping together to serving Reading together, specifically related to the opioid crisis. To focus on these commitments, we will suspend worshipping at the Service of Christian Unity and at Thanksgiving together in 2020. The Reading Church Council feels called to develop programming that all the churches can share in in order to make strides in addiction prevention, to equip young people to make healthy choices and to know Jesus, and to bring good news to our neighbors who are grieving as the result of the opioid epidemic. The Reading Church Council does not know yet what programs or strategies we will implement together to reach these goals, but it is encouraging that all the churches feel pulled in the same direction—the Holy Spirit seems to be nudging us all along together, and I am hopeful that together we can accomplish more than we could on our own.

Please keep your eyes open in the next few months for where God might be sending us or to whom God might be sending us so that we can respond to the Holy Spirit’s stirring among us. Please keep your hearts and minds open as well; as is often the case with God, we may very well be led in a direction that we never expected, but the joy will be greater than we expected, too.

In Christ,  
+Pastor Emily Beckering

## Music Director's Report

For the second year in a row, we begin with our Sunday morning liturgy. How appropriate!

Last year I wrote about the Worship Committee's efforts to add variety to worship while maintaining quality. And I argued for adding an acknowledgement of our jazz heritage, particularly as reflected in the church-music work of African-American Lutherans. There is a rather large amount of this material. Some of it has been around for a very long time but only made it into print in recent years. Some of it is recently composed but clearly shows its roots the traditional Spirituals. The Worship Committee spent some time during the summer listening and singing. There is such a large amount of material to sift through. Eventually, a consensus emerged that a lot of the better stuff is encapsulated in the collection the church compiled as *This Far by Faith* in 1999.

After this preliminary decision, the nudging of the Spirit became evident as difficulties simply fell away. A member of the committee, Carole Replogle, offered *mirabile dictu* to underwrite to expense of placing copies of *This Far by Faith* ("TFF") in the pews. TFF itself contains plenty of spirituals and liturgical music – but also two complete worship settings: *River of Life* and *Liturgy of Joy*, which have their origins in earlier compilations by Tillis Butler and James Capers, respectively. I planned to start introducing them, canticle by canticle, in late summer, with the thought that we would figure out which of the two settings fit us better at the present time. That did not go at all well. It was my mistake that we try to introduce new congregational song without the choir on duty.

When the choir returned in September, learning new music went much more smoothly. Choosing between the two TFF settings was difficult. The Worship Committee suggested we ask the Choir to decide. But the choir could not, as some canticles for each setting were clear favorites. Eventually, the choir's decision was to use canticles from both settings, so that all the stronger choices were included. We took comfort in a report from Kate Keith, who had experienced that approach in another congregation, that such a solution could be workable. And so it has proven.

Music from the TFF settings is now the congregation's Fall liturgy. The other settings were slightly rearranged to accommodate that scheduling.

And now we have seven settings for seven calendar seasons. A copy of the new Annual Liturgy Cycle is included below.

ST. PAUL EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH  
ANNUAL LITURGY CYCLE  
Revised by Worship Committee: 4 Nov, 2019

From	SEASON	To	LITURGY	COMPOSER & year composed	Special Requirements
Nov 30th	ADVENT	Dec 23rd	Holy Communion (ELW Setting VIII)	Larry Olson, Dennis Carper, Robin Cain, & Jay Beech 2006	cantor for Kyrie
Dec 24th	CHRISTMAS	Dec 25th	Xmas carols substitute for all of Liturgy	Many & various	none
Dec 26th	XMAS- AND EPIPHANYTIDE	Transfiguration	Holy Communion	Garry Cornell 1981	cantor & choir for Kyrie
Ash Wednesday	LENT	Maundy Thursday	Holy Communion (LBW Setting II)	Ronald A. Nelson 1978	cantor for Kyrie & Gloria
Great Vigil	EASTERTIDE	Easter VII or Sunday after Ascension	Bread of Life (WOV Setting 5)	Jeremy Young 1995	cantor for Kyrie
Vigil of Pentecost	WHITSUNTIDE	July 21st	Holy Communion (LBW Setting I)	Richard W Hillert 1978	cantor for Kyrie & Gloria
July 22nd (St. Mary Mag.)	SUMMER	Sept 27th	Deutsche Messe (D 782)	Franz Schubert 1817	none
Sept 28th (St. Michael)	FALL (Michaelmastide)	Christ the King	This Far by Faith River of Life (TFF-I) Liturgy of Joy (TFF-II)	Tillis Butler 1986 James Capers 1992	cantor for Kyrie cantor for Kyrie

We look forward to growing the music program in 2020. 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.

The music program at St. Paul's continues to benefit from many volunteers, particularly Carolyn Koehl, who works with the younger children and directs the Children's Choir, and Jack Wagner, who leads our instrumental music program, conducting the full St. Paul orchestra for the annual June worship in the park and smaller ensembles during the course of each year.

We are blessed with many dedicated and talented musicians, including folks who help both by singing and by playing instruments. During 2019, the congregation has benefited once again from the musical talents of Nancy Erbeck, Eleanor Bardes, and Nick Huitger 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; 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. Guest artists during the year included Trisha Casper (flute), Dani Jensen (oboe), Alycia McClurg (clarinet). and Katie Spjiut (English horn); these four talented instrumentalists were organized into a woodwind quintet by Nick Huitger which played, to general acclaim, for morning worship during this past Advent.

Our Chancel Choir sings most Sundays during the "choir year" which follows the "academic year" and extends from September through the church picnic in June. It also supports 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, Addy Kruse, and Cindy Sieckman; altos Susan Bardes,

Sherry Bronner, Pat Coldiron, Chrison Harris, & Mary Wagner, tenors Cindy Mayhugh, Sarah Papin & David Hill, and basses Rick Hedges, Nick Huitger, Jim Sturgill, & Jack Wagner.

During 2019, the work of the Capital Campaign Committee bore fruit, allowing the signing of a contract with the Muller Pipe Organ Company for the rebuilding of the sanctuary organ. Critically important were also several substantial, anonymous donations. After several years of preparatory negotiation, work finally began in late summer. Much of the work was completed before Muller had to break off to cover tuning requests from many congregations in advance of Christmas. At this writing, work had not resumed in the new year but issues about work done to date were being negotiated.

I very much appreciated the opportunities and events which this congregation has offered me this last dozen or so years. It has been an experience to be treasured.

Barry Prince

## Committee Reports

### CAPITAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

#### *Capital Improvements in 2019*

In review, starting in 2018, the Church Council decided to address capital improvements to better the longevity of the church building and property of the church. After identifying approximately ten items, the committee prioritized them and then determined the funds needed to complete the projects. After a fundraising campaign, we again evaluated the projects and made a recommendation to Council to proceed with a list of items that topped the priority list.

Over the years of 2018 and 2019, the committee completed a major project of replacing the boilers that heat the church, new parsonage doors and windows, LED light bulbs in the sanctuary and organ improvements (still ongoing).

A new two-boiler system that heats the sanctuary, educational rooms and fellowship hall was decided on and installed over the summer of 2018. The new

system is more efficient and can be programmed to monitor the system remotely. During the same time, we were able to replace the old hard-to-get sanctuary light bulbs with new LED bulbs. New entry and storm doors, windows and rear yard fencing were installed at the parsonage: all upgrades definitely needed for energy savings, safety and curb appeal.

All through the time we were installing these items, Barry worked on gathering information and quotes to update and improve the organ. After the boiler project was completed, we presented our recommendation for the organ project to Council for their approval. We committed to that early in the year because of the vendor's backlog of projects. Now as we move into 2020, that project is close to being completed.

As we enter 2020, we have some new volunteers on this committee and are addressing the next projects on the original prioritized list, which includes sanctuary flooring and painting of the sanctuary. The painting has been approved by Council and should be completed by February. The flooring will be addressed following the painting of the sanctuary.

Thanks to all for their input and support in keeping St. Paul's a viable, safe and great place to worship together.

Respectfully submitted,  
Doug Lohmeier, Capital Campaign Committee Chair

#### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

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

Nancy Erbeck, Sarah Papin, and Donald Harris served as the primary Sunday School teachers. A special thank-you to Becky Betsch and 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: Taylor Beckering, Becky Betsch, Sherry Bronner, John, Jeni, and

Bridget Cathcart, Kim Coulehan, Chrissy Harris, Shirley Harbaugh, Steve Headley, Penny Huber, Chelsea King, Linda Lawson, Maggie and Joyce McDowell, Jim and Bess Sturgill.

We have continued to have the monthly breakfast with the leadership of the Hedges family and the faithful help of the Sturgill family, Chet Laine, and Joy and Denny Niefield.

What an awesome time we had with the Vacation Bible School, with the Reading Council of Churches. There were many volunteers! Many of those saints listed in the paragraph above also helped to lead VBS: Becky Betsch, Sherry Bronner, Jeni, Ian, Patrick, Bridget and Donny Cathcart, Leandra Hawkins, Kathy Hirt, Chelsea King (all of whom led small groups and connected with the kids), Bess Sturgill for making crafts amazing, Carroll Mayhugh and David Hill for their special performances to introduce the kids to a pharisee and John Mark to expand our religious and cultural historical knowledge, and for the junior leaders whose assistance was the key ingredient to the campers' fun: Alanna Cathcart, Matthew Lawson, Katie Sturgill. I personally enjoyed bringing the Apostle Paul to life for the Bible station! STAR 93.3 had Kona Ice on the first day.

Family Nights have become "The Gathering" and continue to deepen relationships with God and across generations, growing in faith, and serving together; also, our youth have led and taught many of our youth nights.

The young adults really enjoyed the ELCA youth retreat at Camp Kern. Our young adults also were part of the ELCA Synod Assembly, getting to see how the assembly works, and of course having fun and games also. In 2020, we also are looking to participate again in the Southern Ohio Synod of the ELCA youth retreat this year at Capital University in April. We will start fundraising for the youth assembly in Minnesota next year.

In this past year we have seen the youth take bold steps to show their faith. We are working to keep that trend in 2020.

Respectfully submitted,  
Donald Harris, Christian Education Council Liaison

## DRAMA MINISTRY (ST. PAUL PLAYERS)

*For the Year 2019*

It has been a busy year for the Drama Ministry, having four productions this year. Would like to thank everyone who helped pick the 2019 season. And thank you to Jack and Mary Wagner for sponsoring *McKenna's Choice*.

*McKenna's Choice* by Ev Miller.

Thanks to Terri DeAngelis who stayed after the shows and led discussions about whether McKenna's choice (stopping eating) was a sinful one. I'll just say we had some very good discussions, so thank you again, Terri DeAngelis.

*McKenna's Choice* brought us some new faces in the drama ensemble such as **Jane Peters** who played Officer Cook, **Kylie Schmidt** who played Carl McKenna, **Courtney Flege** who played Wayne McKenna, (yes, she played a male role, and everyone really thought she was a man), **Kelly Hale** who played Carl Baumgartner, and **Jim Sturgill** from our congregation gave it a shot in acting and did a wonderful job. The rest of the cast you all should know: **Randy Blake** as John McKenna, **Jennifer Pence** as Madge McKenna, **Mary Benken** as Mrs. Thompson. Great job everyone!

Also want to thank the crew: **Nick Huitger** who directed, Assistant Producer and Light and Sound **Sarah Papin**, Set Design **Nate Huitger**, **Marie Calhoun** for cooking and all her helpers. Thank you all.

*Finance report:*

Total Sales	\$1771.00
Direct Expense	\$1513.30
Contributed back to St. Paul's	\$257.70

*Cocktails with Mimi* by Mary Chase.

*Cocktails with Mimi* was a "fun for all" show and again got us some new faces at SPP: **David Little** as Clyde Elliot, **Mary Mills** as Edie Ralston and from St. Paul Lutheran Church **Jason Hirt** as Lester Calthorpe. The rest of the cast you all should know: **Dennis Eling** as Sam Nicklaus, **Sherry Bronner** as Mrs. Carleton

(Dody) DeVries, **Jane Peters** as Jane Elliott, **Nate Huitger** as Paul Hansen, **Rachel Thorman** as Mimi Ralston, **Chrison Harris** as Lucy White, **Donald Harris** as Burt Evans, **Cindy Mayhugh** as Eudora Calthorpe and **Carroll Mayhugh** as Judge Leland Calthorpe.

Thanks to the crew: **Barry Prince** for directing the play, **Sarah Papin** for being the assisting director and for running light and sound, **Nick Huitger** for producing, **Jim Sturgill** our Electrician, **Randy Blake** for being stage manager, **Bess Sturgill** and **Katie Sturgill** for costume design and **Linda Miller** and all who helped with cooking and serving and clean-up.

Would like to thank Carroll Mayhugh and his partner (ANF Technologies) for sponsoring *Cocktails with Mimi*.

*Finance report:*

Total Sales	\$3180.00
Direct Expense	\$2593.70
Contributed back to St. Paul's	\$566.30

*The Unexpected Guest* by Agatha Christie.

We hope everyone was as surprised with the ending of the play as we were when we first read the script.

With *The Unexpected Guest* we again welcomed lots of new people: **Grace Francomb** as Laura Warwick, **Kevin Noll** as Michael Starkwedder, **Jose Paris** as Jan Warwick, **Susan Schapiro** as Mrs. Warwick, **Dan Nieman** as Henry Angell, **Neil Geoppinger** as Inspector Thomas, and **Randy King** as Julian Farrar. The rest of the cast you know. Playing the role of Richard Warwick we had **Barry Prince** on Fridays, **Jim Sturgill** on Saturdays and **Nate Huitger** on Sundays; **Sarah Papin** inhabited the role of Miss Bennet, **Owen Kelm** appeared as Sargent Cadwalader.

For the crew we had **Mary Benken** as the director and **Molly Simons** as the assistant director. The production was produced by **David Hill**, with lights and sound by **Donald Harris** and two new people to SPP: Costume Designer was

**Marcha Hunley** and Set Décor was **Ginny Benken**. Once again **Linda Miller** and everyone who helped deserve our thanks for food preparation and cleanup.

*Finance report:*

Total Sales	\$2765.00
Direct Expense	\$1918.53
Contributed back to St. Paul's	\$846.47

*Happy Hollandaise!* by Tim Koenig.

With *Happy Hollandaise!* we again have some new people to SPP. **Kaitlin Otto** as Claire Finley, **Andrew Schiltz** as George Finley, **Meredith Conner** as Vilma Hasenpfeffer. The rest of the cast you know: **Kelly Hale** as Philip Finley, **Owen Kelm** as Larry Finch, **Michelle Cockerham** as Irene Quigley, **Nate Huitger** as Father William Abbott, **Molly Simons** as Mary Abbott and **Carroll Mayhugh** as Inspector Archie Abernathy.

The crew: thanks to **Randy Blake** for directing and his daughter **Rachel Thorman** as associate director and lights and sound, **Cindy Mayhugh** and **Sarah Pappin** for producing, **Barry Prince** for playing the organ and sound effects. Master Carpenters **Nick and Nate Huitger**, Set Décor by **Nate Huitger**. Don't forget the chef de Cuisine, **Linda Miller**, and everyone who helped out in the kitchen.

*Finance report:*

Total Sales	\$2730.00
Direct Expense	\$1484.27
Contributed back to St. Paul's	\$1245.73

*St. Paul Players 2020 Season*

*Steel Magnolias*

by Robert Harling

March 6, 7, 13, 14 and 15

*The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*

Based on the novel by Mark Haddon

Adapted by Simon Stephens

June 5, 6, 7, 12, 13 and 14

*Dial "M" For Murder*

by Frederick Knott

August 21, 22, 23, 28, 29 and 30

*The Game's Afoot*

by Ken Ludwig

December 4, 5, 6, 11, 12 and 13

God has been very good to me and has helped me with the Drama Ministry. He has brought us some fine new actors and returned some veterans to our stage, even while keeping us financially solvent. I 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.

Some new changes with SPP: I will be stepping down as Artistic Director of the SPP and Sarah Papin and Nick Huitger will work together as Co-Artistic Directors of SPP 2020. Don't worry, I'm still part of SPP, just not in charge.

Thank you all and God Bless.

Respectfully submitted,  
David Hill, Artistic Director

## EVANGELISM COMMITTEE

*Committee members:* Diana Hawkins (chair), Chelsea King, Holly Ford, Nancy Erbeck, Jane Erbeck, Penny Huber, Joyce McDowell, Pastor Emily Beckering

### *2019 Year in Review*

1. Publicity – update and keep current St. Paul's website and Facebook accounts and provide announcements of upcoming events and photos of events as they occur. This is done with the help of our Administrative Assistant Jane Owen, a partnership that has helped our committee immensely.

2. Update electronic community calendars with our events. Send out flyers and posters to area businesses and local daycares, send email announcements to participants in past events and put up yard signs and banners on the church property prior to community events to help promote the events in the local area.
3. Welcome – make sure that all visitors are welcomed and provide welcome gifts and literature on the Lutheran service and our outreach activities. When a new member joins our congregation, the Evangelism Committee sponsors and facilitates the reception.
4. Engage/Connect – some activities from this year included:
  - An Easter Egg Hunt after church on Easter Sunday
  - A reception for recent graduates in May
  - Ice Cream Social and lunch for our members and friends in July
  - Reception for new members in December
5. Outreach Community Events for this year:
  - 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 and Vacation Bible School, 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 Booth at the Reading Bridal show as a member of the Reading Bridal District in September
  - A Fall Festival Costume Party in October
  - A Live Nativity in December

### *Evangelism Goals for 2020*

Help fulfill the mission of St. Paul by spreading the message of Jesus Christ in the community through outreach programs. Increase congregational satisfaction, membership and worship attendance through strengthening personal connections within the congregation through fellowship and service. Increase our community presence helping to spread the gospel message and create an opportunity for awareness of the spiritual gifts this congregation offers. 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 on the Evangelism Committee and members and friends of this congregation who have faithfully devoted their time and energy to make these efforts a success throughout the year.

Respectfully submitted,  
Diana Hawkins, Evangelism Chair

## FINANCE COMMITTEE

### *Committee Activities*

Members of the Finance Committee in 2019 included: Nelson Langefeld, 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 twice in 2019.

Committee activities for 2019 included:

- Monitoring expenditures in the Capital Campaign Fund
- Monitoring congregational monthly financial status
- Monitoring committees' performance to budget
- Exploring on-line donations
- Exploring credit card purchase for Drama ministry tickets
- Rethinking the use of credit card for business purchases
- Exploring succession planning options for Treasurer and Financial Secretary positions
- Exploring options for accounting practices, record keeping, and generation of reports.



## PROPERTY COMMITTEE

2019 was a productive year for Property. We had so much help, thanks to Joyce McDowell, Denny Niefield, Joe Heskamp, Jim Miller, John Kerlin, Jim Sturgil, Doug Lohmeier, Linda Miller, Mark Betsch, Jane Owen Admin for St. Paul, Linda Miller, Mark Lohmeier, Nelson Langefeld and all the others who helped with Property concerns in 2019.

Some property projects from 2019:

- Painting was done on the two covered entrances and in and around the church by Joe Heskamp, Denny Niefield, and Joyce McDowell.
- The fellowship hall was cleaned and waxed by a new contractor and will be buffed and polished a few times each year.
- Painting contractor bids for the Sanctuary were updated and other new bids obtained. Work to be done in January.
- Blacktop re-coating and stripping bids obtained, and work was completed.
- Dumpster lids were replaced at no charge after some conversations with Republic Waste Management.
- Siegel roofing was contracted to clean gutters again and unclog the downspout on the East side of the church.
- A new solution for backlighting of the 2 outdoor crosses was found and will be done as soon as weather permits and volunteers are available.
- Security system cameras are being investigated and will be worked into a solution for better security at the church. There is also a security committee that is working on a safety plan for the church. There will be more to follow on the security committee plans but will come from the Church Council when the plan is ready for review.
- The water fountain in the Narthex was repaired by Mark Betsch, Becky Betsch's husband.
- A new contractor for Janitorial Services was found due to the resignation of Jamie's Cleaning Services. The new contractor is Denny Niefield.

- The HVAC controls for the entire church has been handled by Jane Owen our Admin Person at church. She has done a wonderful job of coordinating all the various groups and functions that happen at church. This is not an easy task.
- Jim Miller has been instrumental in keeping the wireless thermostats up and running with all the power outages in the area lately. It is not an easy task.
- There were 2 more speakers installed in the Carillon System and now it can be heard on all 4 sides of the church exterior. I would like to thank Jim Miller for helping manage that also.
- Busch Elevator contractors also inspected the elevator and we obtained the state inspection approval form required. We had Silco Inc. do the annual inspections and replacement of Fire Extinguishers and Emergency Exit Signs and Batteries.
- John Kerlin did our Back-Flow Valve Inspections and several other items this year, saving the church major dollars.

I would like to thank Linda Miller for all the things she does that go unnoticed, like putting salt out before the Christmas Eve service, doing dishes (especially coffee cups) and cleaning of the kitchen.

If anyone in church sees something that needs to be done concerning a health or safety issue, please let me know, or Joyce McDowell, or Jane or Pastor Emily. Please feel free to do what you think needs to be done immediately, if you can't reach someone and it is a safety issue. An example would be putting salt out if the parking lot is icy. There should always be salt buckets in the winter by both glass entry doorways.

You can call my cell number anytime, 513-378-5464, or email me at [property@stpaulreading.org](mailto:property@stpaulreading.org).

Respectfully submitted,  
Dennis King, Property Chair

## 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 Kathy Crosby serving as Council liaison. Other members included Shirley Harbaugh, Kathy Hirt, and Janet King.

In 2019 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 approximately 75 items such as food items, diapers, paper towels, toothbrushes, toothpaste, etc. This past summer we collected 394 glue sticks for Valley Interfaith's back-to-school project and, in November, over 200 cans of chicken noodle soup for Christmas baskets. We continued our Giving Tree donation of hats, scarves, and gloves/mittens. We thank Ron and Shirley Harbaugh for delivering all these items to Valley Interfaith. This Christmas, Terri DeAngelis and Leslie Willet organized gifts for two families through Valley Interfaith. Each child received five gifts thanks to the generosity of our congregation. At the end there were three tags left on the tree, and the Evangelism Committee fulfilled these requests, including a dollhouse for a ten-year-old girl.

*Operation Christmas Child:* This is a global effort to make a Christmas celebration possible for children around the world. We sponsored a bake sale in August to raise money for shipping the boxes. Thanks to our wonderful congregation, we were able to contribute \$365.50 for distributing our 84 shoeboxes. These boxes were filled with personal hygiene items, toys, books, and other supplies. Kathy Hirt was chair of this project, including delivering the boxes to the regional collection center.

*Heifer International Project:* The quarters collected in our quarter tube during the year are sent to Heifer International to fight poverty and hunger in developing countries. This year we collected \$120, which was used to purchase a sheep. Wool is a valuable product that struggling families can use for clothing or sell for extra income.

*Ronald McDonald House:* Our congregation donated 10.4 pounds of pop can pull tabs, two small bags of toothpaste, 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:* Chelsea King has delivered old eyeglasses and 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 plastic bottles out of landfills each year. Jane Erbeck has continued to crochet sleeping mats out of clean donated plastic grocery bags, to be used as ground covers to keep our homeless neighbors dry and warm. In 2019 she has created 82 mats.

*Reading children:* Reading Elementary School asked if we could donate 16 new or gently used children's coats. We exceeded our goal.

*Transportation to church:* Shirley Harbaugh arranges rides to church for members in need of transportation.

*Good Samaritan Fund:* With this fund we continue to empower all members of St. Paul to see and to care for Christ in one another.

*Emergency food bags:* We held a nonperishable food drive, chaired by Janet King, to keep Pastor Emily supplied with emergency food bags which she distributes at her discretion.

*Dorcas Circle:* This year the Dorcas ladies worked to complete 133 quilts for Lutheran World Relief. We are tracking them again – keep an eye on the map in the narthex to see where our quilts are sent all over the world. A quilt raffle was held and quilts were won by Marie Calhoun and Shirley Lathrop. Proceeds from the raffle, over \$400, were sent to LWR to help with shipping quilts to various parts of the world. A big thank-you goes to Jim and Linda Miller, Nelson Langefeld, and Carole Replogle for helping to pack the quilts, and to Marty Lohmeier for

helping Elinor deliver the quilts to the truck in Dayton. Thanks to everyone who donated fabric and sheets.

Respectfully submitted,  
Penny Huber, Social Concerns Chair

## STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

The Stewardship Committee was chaired by Carole Replogle who was also the council liaison. Other committee members were: Pastor Emily Beckering, Holly Ford, and Nancy Erbeck.

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 Carole Replogle on the Stewardship Prayer Wheel (a Prayer Wheel for members to spin with various Bible verses listed on it), biblical letters from Pastor Beckering on tithing, personal testimonies by members on how tithing affects their relationship with God, and letters from the Stewardship Committee. 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 assist St. Paul in developing its 2020 budget and to advance St. Paul's many ministries. The results of the fall stewardship drive were very encouraging: Thirty-nine households returned the estimate of giving cards, a 5% increase from 2018; \$125,066 was pledged as compared to \$121,566 in 2018, and 17 households increased their giving over last year as compared to 8 households in 2018 – a 212% 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 through St. Paul.

In August Pastor Beckering, Nelson Langefeld, and Carole Replogle attended a "Stewardship for All Seasons" seminar at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, West Chester, OH. Numerous ideas were gathered for possible use in 2020.

Each month during 2019 included events and activities to promote members awareness of their lives, thinking about “Mind, Body, & Spirit” while keeping Christ at the center of their lives. Activities include chair volleyball on the second Tuesday of the month, financial workshops, cooking classes, and ways to help needy individuals and families.

Each week we encourage you to watch the pictures/videos displayed on the smart TV in the narthex to see how we have and can respond to God’s love. These slideshows display 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, in order to continue to live out our calling to raise up and equip the body of Christ for service in the world and to connect stewardship with worship, we will be praying for and blessing a number of committees and leaders during worship this year. In 2019 we began “Blessing of the Lector,” giving special thanks for those individuals who read the scripture passages each Sunday. Also, the Stewardship for All Seasons program will be incorporated into the Stewardship drive for 2020.

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

Respectfully submitted,  
Carole Replogle, Stewardship Chair

#### THRIVENT ACTION TEAM PROJECTS

In 2019, St. Paul’s Thrivent Financial members used their membership to benefit many of the congregation’s activities. We were able to help fund sixteen different events or activities to a total of \$4,000. These projects included Dorcas Circle, St. Paul Players productions, community breakfasts, the Live Nativity, the Ice Cream Social, Vacation Bible School, Rally Day and the Easter Vigil, to name some.

This Action Team support has allowed us to do many things in bigger and better ways to help us provide outreach and community service. As we go into 2020, I look forward to assisting our members to source funds to do more.

If you have ideas that need funding, please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully submitted,  
Doug Lohmeier

## WORSHIP AND MUSIC COMMITTEE

The Worship and Music Committee was chaired by Linda Miller. Members of the committee this year included: David Hill, Barry Prince, Carroll Mayhugh, Sarah Papin, Carole Replogle, Nick Huitger, Dottie Deloatch, and Pastor Emily Beckering. The committee met five times in 2019. Kathy Crosby sought volunteers to read the lessons and greeters for Sunday morning services.

### *Ministry Additions and Changes*

Nelson Langefeld joined the Assisting Minister rotation; Cindy Mayhugh joined the Hymn Committee; and Janet King resigned as a member of the committee but is still actively leading the Altar Guild. The committee evaluated and unanimously recommended the purchase of *This Far by Faith* (TFF) hymnals to provide an alternative in both music and liturgy. 200 hymnals were purchased (donated) and placed in the pews. One new addition taken from the TFF hymnal is the “Blessing of the Lectors” which was started on the first Sunday in Advent. The maroon “Other Song Book” hymnals were removed from the pews with disposition TBD. One service (instead of two) was offered on Maundy Thursday and an Easter Sunrise service was added. Weekday Advent services were not offered due to minimal attendance in 2018.

### *Committee Activities*

The Hymn Committee chose hymns for all worship services in 2019. 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, Pastor Emily Beckering, Barry Prince, Cindy Mayhugh, and Linda Miller.

The Assisting Ministers group in 2019 included Nelson Langefeld, Doug Lohmeier, Terry McDowell, and Nancy Erbeck, Leandra Hawkins, Donald Harris, and Carroll Mayhugh. David Hill served as an Assisting Minister when the choir was on break for the summer.

Lent, Holy Week, and Easter - Ash Wednesday was on March 6th and Wednesday evening Lenten services began on March 13th. Lenten services included Vespers, Drama (*McKenna's Choice*), Compline, a Healing, and Holden Evening Prayer service. Traditional cultural/national-themed meals were replaced with Family Favorites, Southern Fare, Appetizers, Breakfast, and Hometown Eats. These were a welcomed and successful change of the meal offered prior to the Wednesday evening services. The Maundy Thursday evening service milieu was a magnificent creation and allowed attendees to participate in the Last Supper like the disciples. Janet King was the initiator and creator of this "Table". There were opportunities provided for either Hand and/or Foot-Washing. Pastor Emily delivered an exceptional sermon. Comments included: "Table Fantastic" and "Sermon Fantastic". The service was 1 hour and 45 minutes but so well done that no one complained about the length. The Good Friday noon service included Prophecy and Fulfillment readings. Tenebrae included the Solemn Reproaches/Adoration of the Crucified. On Saturday (Easter Vigil), two services were offered, and it seemed to work well. Children participated in the early service including a parade through the neighborhood and a more traditional service was offered in the evening. A special thank you to Carroll Mayhugh, Bess Sturgill, and Nelson Langefeld for coordinating these two vigils to meet the spiritual needs of the whole body of Christ from our youngest to our oldest members at St. Paul's.

A Sunrise service was held on Easter morning. Those who attended it loved it. The Drama group then equipped the youth to provide breakfast. This was followed by a traditional Easter service.

The Church Picnic was held at Baxter Park on June 16th. Thanks again to the Lohmeiers for providing us a perfect place to worship outdoors, and doing a terrific job grilling the food. The picnic was well-attended, resulting in the problem

of running a little short on grilled meat this year. Shirley Harbaugh provided her usual support in assuring we had the correct condiments and supplies.

A Healing Service (10/13) and Blessing of the Animals (10/5) were provided this past Fall.

St. Paul hosted the Reading Church Council (RCC) ecumenical Thanksgiving service on November 26th. The RCC has voted to participate in community service projects in place of ecumenical church services next year.

A Lessons and Carols service was offered on Sunday, December 29<sup>th</sup> in place of the regular worship service. Carroll Mayhugh coordinated/directed the readings while Barry Prince responded to hymn requests from the congregation. It was so well enjoyed that we plan to create a service or two to keep on file in case we are without a pastor on any given Sunday in the future.

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

The Drama Ministry performed four productions, once again demonstrating a net profit for the St. Paul congregation. This ministry is self-supporting and continues to grow. As a result, in 2020 we plan to make this ministry independent with its own Board of Directors (already in place). It will be separate from the Worship and Music Committee. However, the work of these committees is so closely aligned/interdependent on some issues and will continue to require good communication and cross membership.

Many thanks to all who contribute to this important work including our volunteer readers, greeters, ushers, and acolytes!

Respectfully submitted,  
Linda C. Miller

## Parochial Report

### *Members received during 2019*

by Baptism	1	April 14	Desiree Riddle
by Affirmation / Transfer In	4	April 21	Jennifer Pence
		December 8	Beth Wernery
			Dennis Niefield
			Joy Niefield
Total	5		

### *Membership losses during 2019*

by Death	1	March 11	Rita Edwards
by Transfer Out	4	January 1	Doug Isaacs
			Sandy Isaacs
			Cole Isaacs
			Jared Isaacs
Total	5		

### *Average Worship Attendance*

12/31/19: 87

12/31/18: 81

### *Total Membership*

12/31/19: 222 members

12/31/18: 222 members