

**MARCH 2018 PARISH POST**  
*St. Paul's & Buffalo Lutheran Churches*

*Comments from Pastor Thea . .*

Page 1

Greetings:

One of the most frequently asked questions I hear in my work as a pastor is, "How can we get more people coming to church?" This is a challenge for churches across the country and there is an abundance and vast array of responses. One reply to this inquiry came from an ELCA pastor in Colorado. I recently read these words and it got my attention.

*"We've decided to quit being a welcoming church. No kidding.  
We're giving it up."* Living Lutheran, June 2016

He further explained: "Like so many congregations, we've sunk an amazing amount of time and energy into becoming a welcoming church. We changed worship styles, trained greeters and ushers, wore name tags, brewed coffee, went to workshops on hospitality and put our friendliest people in the most prominent places on Sunday morning." This congregation came to understand that they needed to rethink their question of growing the church, to expand their view of God's mission in this world and think about welcoming differently.

While all their energy to create a welcoming environment was important, this congregation realized that they had many gifts to offer members their community: inspired worship, forgiveness and grace through the congregational community, Bible study, quilting, youth events...But waiting for the greater community to show-up at the door was not working. They decided that to participate in God's mission in this world they would need to start **inviting** people to this space and place that they loved. Welcoming is passive. It denotes waiting for visitors and guests to drop by. **Inviting** is different. Inviting is active, requiring us to reach out.

Here is how the church in Colorado assisted their member to actively reach into their community - a challenge to be taken **one step at a time**:

*Pastor Thea's message continues on Page 2 . . .*

Challenge 1—Try using the phrase “my church” in a conversation with one person each week. It is as simple as talking with just one person one time each week during the month. Example: “Just go one block past my church and you will see the post office.”

Challenge 2 – consider one word or phrase that describes your congregation well, then use that word to finish the phrase: “My church is \_\_\_\_.” Try doing this in conversation with one person per week during the month. Example: “Youth activities? My church is having a rally day this month.”

Challenge 3 – Think about one thing your congregation does very well. Perhaps youth ministry, missions work, ... Use that to finish the phrase: “My church is really good at\_\_\_\_.” Again, one time per week with one person in conversation. Example: “My church is really good at responding to needs in the community.”

Challenge 4 – Invite one person to check out something in which your congregation is involved. Example: “I am doing Meals on Wheels this week. Would you like to come with me?” “We are taking the youth of our church fishing. Would you like to join us?”

Challenge 5 – Invite someone you know to come to worship with you, and maybe offer to pick them up to accompany them. Yes, there it is. As a people we have so often placed our faith in the private section of our lives. Yet, we are called by God to be Christ for our neighbor, not just the person sitting next to us in the pew, but to a hurting world. We have so much to offer. Let us not minimize ourselves, and our church, or the activity of the Holy Spirit who is out there ahead of us and with us.

In Christ,

Thea Monson, Interim Pastor

FINANCIAL NEWS TO NOTE!

BUFFALO LUTHERAN CHURCH

Checking Account balance –

Parish Nurse Account balance

Information currently not available

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Checking Account Balance – \$ 7694.13

Dear Family and Friends,

50-70 million Americans have a sleep disorder or struggle with sleep such as difficulty falling asleep, staying asleep or both. In order to survive, people need the basic elements of food, water, oxygen and sleep. We spend up to one third of our life, asleep so sleep is a contributor to overall health and well-being.

Stimulants like coffee and energy drinks, alarm clocks, and external lights such as lights from electronic devices can interfere with our “circadian rhythm” or natural sleep/wake cycle.

How much sleep is recommended? A newborn needs 14-17 hours a night, Infant 12-15 hours, toddler 11-14 hours, preschool 10-13 hours, school age 9-11 hours, teens 8-10 hours, young adult 7-9 hours, adult 7-9 hours.

Assess how you feel on different amounts of sleep such as; Are you productive and happy on seven hours of sleep? Do you depend on caffeine to get you through the day? Do you feel sleepy when driving?

What can I do to get better quality sleep? Here are some sleep Tips: 1. Stick to the same bed time and wake up time even on the weekends. This helps to regulate your body's clock and could help you fall asleep and stay asleep for the night. 2. Avoid naps, especially in the afternoon. Power napping may help you get through the day, but if you find that you can't fall asleep at bedtime, eliminate even short catnaps may help. 3. Exercise, but not close to bedtime. Vigorous exercise is best, but even light exercise is better than no activity. 4. Evaluate your room. Clean, quiet, and dark sleep space helps. Your bedroom should be cool –between 60 and 67 degrees. Your bedroom should be free from noises or other distractions. This includes a bed partner's sleep disruptions such as snoring. Consider using blackout curtains, eye shades, ear plugs, “white noise” machines, humidifiers, fans and other devices. 5. Avoid alcohol, cigarettes, and heavy meals in the evening. 6. Wind down. Do a calming activity such as reading and avoiding electronics before bed. 7. Sleep on a comfortable mattress and pillows. Make sure your mattress is comfortable and supportive. The one you have been using for years may have exceeded its life expectancy about 9 or 10 years for most good quality mattresses. Have comfortable pillows and make the room attractive and inviting for sleep but also free of allergens that might affect you and objects that might cause you to slip or fall if you have to get up.

If you are interested in taking a sleep IQ quiz go to:

<https://sleepfoundation.org/node/3478/take>

Peace in Him,

Gwen Fraase RN

Parish Nurse Community Health Ministry

Source: <http://sleepfoundation.org/>

<https://connect.mayoclinic.org/discussion/sleep-hygiene/> <https://connect.mayoclinic.org/discussion/sleep-hygiene/>

**MARCH SUNDAY WORSHIP WILL BE HELD AT 9:00 AM AT ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH AND AT 11:00 AM AT OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH, PAGE. TO REACH PASTOR THEA MONSON PLEASE CALL 701-668-2295, 218-820-7006 (cell), OR BY EMAIL AT [pastorthea@yahoo.com](mailto:pastorthea@yahoo.com)**

**Coffee and compliments:** Please consider join us for a time to share coffee and treats after every worship service. We forget to remind and thank people for sponsoring this time of fellowship. May we "get together".

**Confirmation:** There won't be Confirmation classes during Lent as students will be participating in Lenten Services. We will have Confirmation on Palm Sunday, March 25, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

† May we all keep in prayers of compassion and sympathy Dan Johnson's family and friends. Dan Johnson began his teaching and coaching career at Maple Valley and shared so much with so many of our children as well as the adults. He died suddenly February 10 and his Memorial Service was held February 16 at Faith Lutheran Church in Valley City.

Let us keep Kal Boyd in prayers for healing after his recent hospitalization.

**Would you like a visit from Pastor Thea or do you know somebody that would like that visit?** Please let her know or let us know at the church office! If you recommend that she visit someone make sure that person okays the visit. If you know of somebody that should be included in Sunday morning prayers be sure that person does approve of being mentioned in the prayers.

**Mid-Week and Holy Week Lenten Services:** All these services are preceded by a 6 PM Soup & Sandwich Supper and services will be held at 7 PM. Services are scheduled on March 7, March 21, and Good Friday, March 30 at St. Paul's Lutheran Church. On March **14, and on Maundy Thursday, March 29, at Our Savior Lutheran Church at Page.**

**Sunday, March 11:** Church Council Training at Petersburg Lutheran Church & First Lutheran Church, Enderlin from 2-5 PM (topics will be the same at both churches). The Synod management, the role of the council, evaluating your work together, and much more! No registration necessary.

**Wednesday, March 14:** This is the regular evening for the Buffalo Lutheran Council meeting--please confirm this as to not conflict with the Lenten Service.

**Sunday, March 25:** St. Paul's Council will meet after church service.