



ST. PAUL LUTHERAN MESSENGER

May
2016

Volume 17 Issue 5

Look What's Inside

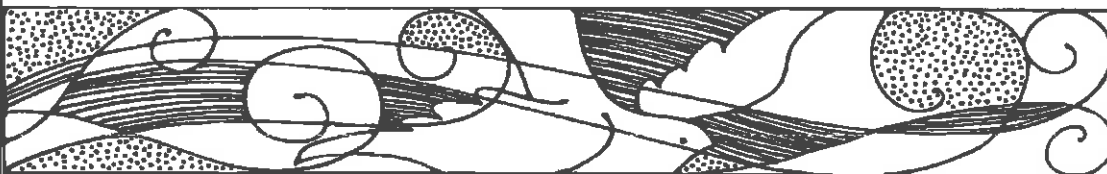
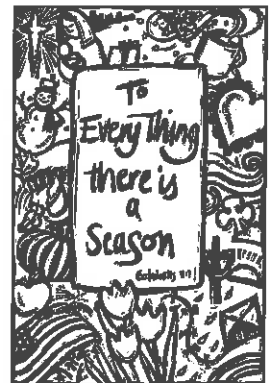
In one of my former congregations, we had a program called Stephen Ministry. Stephen Ministry trains Pastors and lay people how to serve people who are going through difficult times in life. One young man took the training even though he was uncertain that he could do that kind of ministry. After he had served two terms as a Stephen Minister he had to step down because of a job change. He wrote a letter to me after he resigned explaining to me how being a Stephen Minister had changed his life. He said that he now sensed more fulfillment and confidence in serving others. He said that his family noticed a change in him as a result of the training and service that he did. He thanked me for encouraging him to become a Stephen Minister since it had been such a blessing for him.

When people in the church find their niche and get the training to serve in one of the many capacities in ministry, they find fulfillment and rewards far beyond their expectations. I share this because I see firsthand the joy of discovering your spiritual gift and using it for the Lord. I encourage you to complete the spiritual gifts inventory and discover your gift. Please do so as soon as possible and return the last page to the church office. In Ephesians 4:11-13 Paul tells us that one of the pastor's responsibilities is to teach and equip the people of the church for ministry. If God designed it that way you can trust that if you put your spiritual gift to work, you will be blessed for it.

Pastor Mick

Copies of the Spiritual Gifts Inventory are located on the table in the narthex. Please be sure to return the back page of the inventory to the church office no later than May 15.

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JOY OF HARVEST MINISTRIES

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April 2016

Ordination/Installation

Pastor Doua Xiong was ordained and installed on April 3rd into the office of Holy Ministry at St. Paul, Merced to minister to St. Paul HMong Congregation and Mission at Large for the Northern California Region. Thank God for families, friends, and relatives who came from the Midwest and all over California to celebrate God's glory and fellowship together with us.



Reverend Doua's Call

Pastor Doua is now taking over the full responsibilities of Joy of Harvest Ministries in the Central Valley of California: Ministering, reaching out, and teaching and raising up leaders for the harvest field.

A mission priority for Pastor Doua is to grow the HMong Congregation at St. Paul, Merced. He has begun reaching out to the HMong community through local HMong leaders and families. It is important that quality time and relationship building must be in place even before the Good News of Jesus is shared with the HMong people. Pastor Doua also

volunteers at Mercy Hospital in Merced to visit and pray for HMong patients.

The HMong Congregation at St. Paul, Merced worships around 17-20 members on a weekly basis. Sunday School and adult Bible study start at 10:30 and HMong worship at 11:45 on Sunday mornings. HMong Women Bible study is on Sunday evenings.

The Lord is love and patience; therefore, we pray that the Holy Spirit gives Pastor Doua and Sue patience as they continue to reach out to the HMong community and grow St. Paul HMong ministry in Merced.

Leaders Gather

Pastor Doua continues to gather LCMS HMong church leaders in the Central Valley once a month to support, encourage, and grow together in Word, Sacrament, and Mission. These leaders include Pastor Khai Lee from Peace, Fresno; Deacon Michael Lo from Greenhaven, Sacramento; and Deacon Tao Lee from St. Andrews, Stockton. In HMong ministry, it is important that the wives too are partnering in the ministry. Therefore, the wives of these leaders are also learning and growing together alongside with their husbands.

LWML CNH District 2016 Convention

Pastor Doua and his wife Sue attended the LWML Convention for the first time and brought along with them a young woman representative from the HMong Congregation. The Convention was held in Visalia, CA from April 15th -17th. Pastor Doua and Sue were invited as mission speakers. This was a great experience for them both as they had the opportunity to share the ministry of Joy of Harvest to the LWML. Also, it really opened up their eyes to see the value of a penny from a whole new different perspective and how God works through those mite boxes. Every penny makes a difference!

Thank You!

A thank you and appreciation to all of our supporters. We have trust in God that He continues to provide for Joy of Harvest through His people like you. As we know, this is not an easy road but Jesus had already paved the way for us. Together, let us continue this walk in faith Jesus Christ.

Blessings

May God bless you and keep you safe from harm and danger physically, mentally, emotionally, and most importantly, spiritually.

PRESIDENT'S NEWS

Hi Congregation Members, Families and Friends of St. Paul

It's hard to believe another month has gone by and another newsletter update is here. As always, we are very busy here at St. Paul Lutheran Ministries. God is keeping our plates full.

Let me introduce to you Pastor Doua Xiong. He was ordained and installed as the Pastor of the HMong Ministry at St. Paul on April 3rd. You may remember him as Vicar Doua Xiong. We are so happy for his accomplishment of becoming a pastor and that God has blessed this ministry with his leadership. We look forward to the HMong Ministry flourishing through his leadership and for spiritual growth in the community.

We have scheduled a Voters (Membership) Meeting for Sunday, May 22nd at 1:00PM for the purpose to:

1. Discuss and approve the updated policy based governance guidelines for St. Paul Lutheran Ministries.
2. Discuss and approve moving forward with the LCEF loan and Merced city application/permit process for connecting to city water supply.

The Senior Pastor Call Task Force Team has received a list of five pastoral candidates from the CNH District President. The team has reviewed, discussed and contacted the candidates. Four candidates have agreed to move forward with the call process and potential interview with St. Paul. The team is working with a Human Resource consultant, Pastor Rod Hall to help determine the best candidates to move forward with interviews. His recommendations will help the team make the best use of time by interviewing candidates that fit the strategic plan the transition team has outlined for our ministry. Further information will be brought to your attention as it arises. Please continue to pray for search process we are going through as we look to find the next senior pastor God has planned for us.

Sunday, May 15th is Confirmation Sunday at the 8:45AM service. There will be five youth from our congregation being confirmed and furthering their relationship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Please join us on that Sunday to celebrate and encourage them in their spiritual growth and development.

I want to thank Mr. Dave Lundin and Mr. Lonn Boyer for their time and commitment every Sunday evening to the confirmation class the last two years and getting our confirmands ready for this important time in their spiritual lives. I would also like to thank James and Heather Nardello for leading Bible Song (Sunday school) every Sunday Morning. All of their commitments have been a tremendous blessing for our children. Please take the time to thank all of them for their dedicated service to the Lord.

The Harvest Dinner is scheduled for Saturday, November 12th. Our wonderful holiday celebration is coming back. This happens to be our biggest fundraiser but more importantly, it is a great opportunity for St. Paul to connect with the community. Everyone is welcome. We are in need for several individuals to head up the planning process to make this a successful event. Please contact Mary Rahn or myself if you are interested.

The Board of Directors will be meeting on Saturday, May 21th to plan out the remainder of the year and to strategically plan the forward progress of St. Paul Lutheran Ministries for 2016 and 2017. Please pray that God guides us through this endeavor and leads us in the path He has for this ministry at St. Paul.

In Christ,

Paul Cook – Mission & Ministry Board of Directors – President



Our Annual Golf Tournament is scheduled for Friday, Sept. 30th at Rancho del Rey in Atwater. Register to play golf, sponsor a hole, donate a prize, or volunteer to help – we need all of the above. Check our website for all the details www.hfhmerced.org.

Brush with Kindness applications are available online and we will be doing more projects as we have volunteer available. Homeowners, who aren't physically able to do small projects, should call us at 726-0850.

If you have some expertise to share and would like an application so an interview can be arranged to be considered to be a board member, please check our website hfhmerced.org or call 726-0850 and have one mailed to you. We are looking for someone interested in fundraising, computer skills and legal expertise. Each member of our board is responsible for a task, so it is a working board and together we work as a team to accomplish the goals we have agreed upon.

If you would like to visit one of our board meetings to see if this is what God has planned for you to do, please call me to add you to our agenda.

Jan Sorge, President & Church Relations Chair, 209-769-1884 or merced-hostel@juno.com

You're invited to an Open Forum with Pastor Mick
On Wednesday, May 4, @ 7 p.m.

This is your opportunity to talk to Pastor Mick and ask him any questions you might have.

Meetings will be held in the parish hall and snacks will be provided. If necessary, a third forum will be scheduled. Plan now to attend!



MOTHER'S DAY DINNER

We would like to invite everyone to come out for a Mother's Day Dinner on Sunday, May 8th at 5 PM in the Parish Hall. Chicken stir fry, rice, salad, dessert and beverages will be served. Tickets are \$10 per person and \$5 for children ten and under. Please RSVP by May 5. Contact Jan Sorge or Sue Xiong to purchase your tickets. All proceeds will go to support the Joy of Harvest HMong Ministry.

 **Thrivent Financial for Lutherans®**
Let's thrive!

Thank You to all Thrivent Choice Dollar Donors!

We would like to thank every Thrivent member who has designated St. Paul Lutheran Church as the recipient of their Choice Dollars.

Please remember to continue to support St. Paul through your Choice Dollars in 2016. So far this year we have received \$1026.00 Contact Thrivent by calling 1-800-847-4836 and when prompted, say, "Thrivent Choice." The money that we receive through your donations, help fund a variety of projects around the church.



CHURCH WOMEN UNITED will hold their annual May Friendship Potluck Luncheon on Friday, May 6th at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, 1455 E. Yosemite Ave. Merced, 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Bring a dish to share and enjoy fellowship with your Christian sisters and brothers in our community. The theme is: Finding Grace at the Table." Mission Grant recipients will be our special guests and young people from Young Life will be presenting the program. Grant recipients this year are Haven of Hope Women's Shelter, Life Line – Empowering Impoverished Communities, LOVE INC., Merced County Jail Ministry, Operation Share (Salvation Army Breakfast), Saving Grace Homeless project, WithOut Permission – against Human Trafficking, and Young Life- serving Merced area youth. All men and women are invited to attend.



LUTHERAN WOMEN IN MISSION
(LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE)
also called Lutheran Women in Mission.

MISSION PROJECTS CHOSEN BY DELEGATES FOR 2014-2016

ALL PROJECTS WERE PAID – ALL THANKS TO GOD!!!

New projects were voted on by our delegates at our Convention April 15-17 in Visalia.

KEEP SAVING YOUR COINS AND PUT THEM IN A MITE BOX – OR IN THE BIG MITE BOX IN THE NAR-THEX – EVERY COIN COUNTS TO COMPLETE THESE PROJECTS!

All women in the congregation are invited to attend our monthly meetings. The next meeting is Monday, May 16, 2016. Devotions "Guides My Feet – Our Needs" and the Quarterly Bible Study Topic "Is My Heart Really Unforgiving?" will be shared by all. We meet in the church library from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Mite box and freewill offerings are taken.

Every woman is welcome to join us and get to know your sisters in Christ.

This is the last meeting until September.

VOTERS MEETING MAY 22 AT 1:00 PM IN THE SANCTUARY

Plan now to attend this meeting as we discuss and vote on items concerning the congregation.



2016 LCMS YOUTH GATHERING

In Christ Alone

Held every three years, the LCMS Youth Gathering provides thousands of youth and adults the opportunity to come together as a community of God's people to learn more about Jesus Christ, the Christian faith and their Lutheran identity. The gathering will be held July 16-20, 2016, in New Orleans.

The St. Paul Youth have been busy getting ready for their trip to New Orleans. They attended the CNH Youth Regional get together in Rocklin at St. Matthew Church on April 9. More than 200 youth and adults registered for the event which gave them a chance to meet other youth in the district before the National Youth Gathering in July.

Anya Davidenas, Josh Good, Elizabeth Boyer, Mikayla Good, and Jacob Lundin made the trip. Lots of food, games, prayers and music! A great opportunity to make connections. We will all attend Mardi Gras World in New Orleans together.

The youth are working on finishing up our garden project. We will replant plants we have lost due to lack of water later. Also

need to do one more area and lay down bark. The weeds don't quit growing!

Our May fundraiser will be a cookie sale. We are still working on the logistics. Our Youth are also available for home spring cleaning (garden, garage—you name it). Call Marilyn Anderson at 631-8965 to schedule.



Confirmation will be held on Sunday, May 15 at the 8:45 a.m. service. We have five youth from the congregation who will be confirmed. Members of this confirmation class are: Elliot Cook, Anya Davidenas, Josh Good, Sean Lo, and Faith Xiong.

Plan now to attend this special service and support these youth as they celebrate this milestone in their journey of faith with our Lord.

BIBLE CLASSES AND SUNDAY SCHOOL



HMong Bible Classes
10:30 a.m.

Bible Song (Sunday School)
9:15—10:15 a.m.

HMong Women's Bible Class
6:30 p.m.

Meet in the Parish Hall and walk over to the classroom in the OMC.

Bible Class
Wednesday 10:30 a.m.
Church Library

Both classes meet on Sunday in the library.

Bible Song will not be held on Sunday, May 8.

May 2016 Servants

BIRTHDAYS

May 1 Evelyn Williams
 May 3 Jerry Price
 May 4 Deanna Morgan
 May 8 Herschel Thompson
 May 10 Kent Christensen
 May 12 Lona Sancibrian
 May 13 Frances Rose
 Kathy George
 May 25 Clark Kellogg
 May 27 Mick Ista
 May 29 Dave Lundin

ANNIVERSARIES

May 18 Ron & Carole Legan
 May 19 Kent & Barbara Christensen
 May 30 Pete & Gretchen De la Cruz
 May 31 Paul & Heidi Hayes

BAPTISM BIRTHDAYS

May 1 Russ Pearson
 May 5 Barbara Christensen
 May 8 Syl Braa
 May 10 Karen Wagner
 May 13 Jerry McKenzie
 May 14 Bill Hiller
 Grace Mello
 May 28 Theresa Lund



GREETERS

May 1 (8:45) Greg Bishop
 May 8 (8:45) Scott Chastain
 May 15 (8:45) Phil & Mary Rahn
 May 22 (8:45) Ron & Carole Legan
 May 29 (8:45) Greg & Sandy Bishop

COMMUNION SET UP

Lorry & Dee Hutton

COMMUNION SERVERS

May 1 (8:45)
 May 1 (10:30)
 May 15 (8:45)
 May 15 (10:30)

READERS

May 1 (8:45) Irene Broughton
 May 8 (8:45) Irene Broughton
 May 15 (8:45)
 May 22 (8:45) Irene Broughton
 May 29 (8:45) Jacob & Delaney Lundin

HOSTS ARE NEEDED FOR OUR FELLOWSHIP HOUR AFTER WORSHIP.

PLEASE SIGN UP ON THE CALENDAR ON THE WALL BY THE KITCHEN COUNTER OR CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE 383-3301.



THIS IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT WITH GUESTS AND ALL OUR CHURCH FRIENDS.



2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 8:45 am Worship 9:15 Bible Song 10:30 HMong Bible Study 10:30 Worship 11:45 HMong Worship 6:30 Confirmation	2 Elders 6:00 p.m. Library	3	4 Bible Class 10:30 a.m. Open Forum 7:00 p.m. Parish Hall	5	6 School Family Camp Out 5 p.m. School Playground	7 HMong Language School 9:00 a.m. OMC
8 8:45 am Worship 10:30 HMong Bible Study 10:30 Worship 11:45 HMong Worship 6:30 Confirmation	9	10	11 Bible Class 10:30 a.m.	12	13	14 HMong Language School 9:00 a.m. OMC CNH LWML Meeting 11:00 Library
15 8:45 Confirmation 9:15 Bible Song 10:15 HMong Bible Study 10:30 Worship 11:45 HMong Worship 6:30 New OrL. Youth	16 LWML 10:00 a.m. Library M&M Board 6:00 p.m. Library	17	18 Bible Class 10:30 a.m.	19	20	21 HMong Language School 9:00 a.m. 12:00 PM HMong Family Fun Parish Hall 9:30 a.m. M&M Board—Library
22 8:45 am Worship 9:15 am Bible Song 10:30 HMong Bible Study 10:30 am Worship 11:45 Hmong Wor- ship 6:30 New OrL. Youth	23 Habitat 6:30 p.m. Library	24 Pre-K Graduation 6:30 p.m.	25 Bible Class 10:30 a.m.	26 Singers Company Performance 7:00 p.m.	27	28
29 8:45 am Worship 9:15 am Bible Song 10:30 HMong Bible Study 10:30 am Worship 11:45 Hmong Worship 6:30 New Orleans Youth	30 Memorial Day Church Office, School, Preschool & Daycare closed	31				
<div style="border: 2px solid black; padding: 10px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <p>WORSHIP SERVICES 8:45 a.m. (Traditional) 10:30 a.m. (Contemporary) Communion 1st & 3rd Sundays 11:45 a.m. HMong Worship Service</p> </div>						

May 2016

St. Paul Lutheran Ministries
2916 N. McKee Rd.
Merced CA 95340



"Connecting People to Jesus"

**www.stpaul
merced.org**

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN MINISTRIES

Mission: "Connecting People to Jesus"

MINISTRY STAFF

Interim Pastor
Rev. Mick Ista

HMong Ministries
Pastor Doua Xiong

School Principal
Amy Mello

Pre-School Director
Angelique Faulkner

James & Heather Nardello
Bible Song Leaders

MISSION & MINISTRY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Paul Cook
Treasurer: Marilyn Anderson
Secretary: James Nardello
Mary Rahn, Kathy George
Barbara Christensen, Dick
Homann

Elders: Kent Christensen,
David Lundin, Scott Chastain
Ed Mentz, Jeff George

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