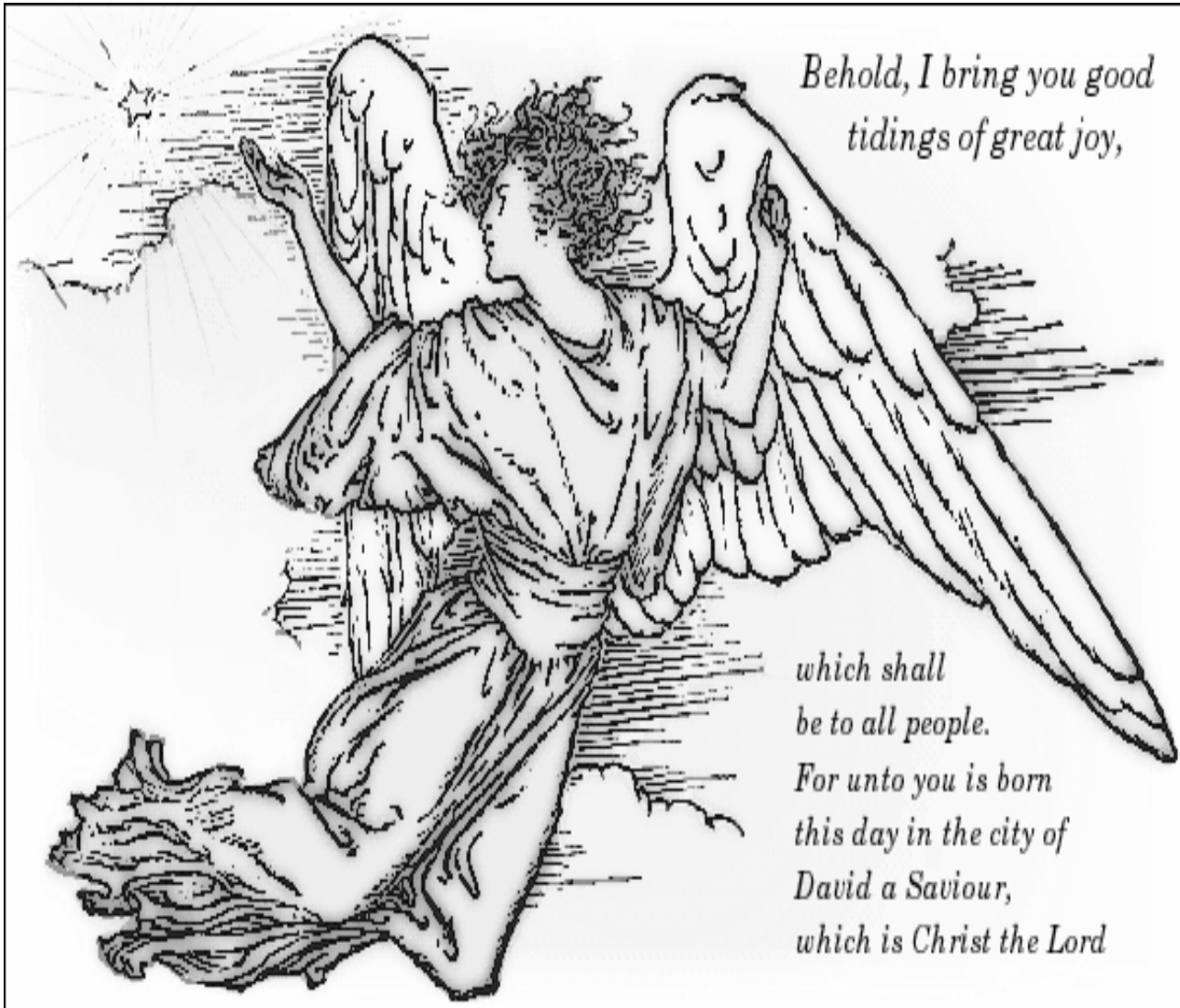


December 2010



St. Paul's Lutheran

# MESSENGER



*Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy,*

*which shall be to all people.*

*For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord*

Phone: 952-938-4683

Email: [stpauls@saintpaulslutheran.org](mailto:stpauls@saintpaulslutheran.org)  
Website: [www.saintpaulslutheran.org](http://www.saintpaulslutheran.org)

Fax: 952-938-1141

**Our mission is to be an open and inviting church spreading the good news of Christ.**



**St. Paul's  
Evangelical  
Lutheran  
Church**

### **WHO WE ARE**

A Reconciling in Christ (RIC) congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), Minneapolis Area Synod, Western Parks and Lakes Conference.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Our mission is to be an open and inviting church spreading the good news of Christ.

### **WORSHIP TIMES**

You are invited to join us regularly on Sunday mornings for 9:30 AM worship followed by refreshments and Christian education. Please check the enclosed calendar for days and times of activities and events.

Also, an interactive calendar is available on our website:

**[www.saintpaulslutheran.org](http://www.saintpaulslutheran.org)**.

Just click the "Calendar" button at the top of the web page and click on the time and event for details and map.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

The office is lightly staffed. Regular office hours are 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM, Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays. Please call before coming in case of unexpected closure.

**Phone: 952-938-4683**

**Fax: 952-938-1141**

**email:**

**[StPauls@saintpaulslutheran.org](mailto:StPauls@saintpaulslutheran.org)**

### **MAILING LIST**

Please notify the church office when you notify the Post Office you will be temporarily away. This is because our newsletters are not forwarded.

St. Paul's congregation is pleased to send you this newsletter. However, if you prefer not to receive it, please call the church office or e-mail us. **The newsletter is also available on our website. Save paper and postage; view it online.**

### **CONGREGATION RELATIONSHIPS**

#### **Partners**

Iglesia Vida Abundante en Cristo, (Abundant Life in Christ), provides a worship service in Spanish at St. Paul's on

Sunday, 1:00 – 3:00 pm and Friday, 7:00 – 9:00 pm.

Bet Shalom Reform Congregation, Interfaith Thanksgiving Eve service  
Lutheran Church of the Reformation, Vigil of Easter

Mizpah United Church of Christ, Interfaith Thanksgiving Eve service  
Oak Knoll Lutheran Church, Confirmation Ministry  
Spirit of Christ Community Lutheran Church and Westwood Lutheran Church, Vacation Bible School 2010

#### **Companion**

Mount Olive Lutheran Church

#### **Mission**

Agora Ministries  
Augustana Chapel View Care Center in Hopkins  
Augustana Emerald Crest  
Beacon Hill Commons  
Gay Straight Alliance (GSA)  
Give Us Wings  
Intercongregation Communities Association (ICA)  
Lutherans Concerned/North America (LC/NA), (RIC)  
Lutheran Social Services (LSS)  
Lutheran World Relief (LWR)  
Meals on Wheels  
Our Saviour's Housing  
ResourceWest of Hopkins  
Sojourner Project  
Thrivent Financial for Lutherans  
West Metro Grief Support

### **ARTICLE SUBMISSION**

Please submit articles as Word documents with your clip art to [stpauls@saintpaulslutheran.org](mailto:stpauls@saintpaulslutheran.org). Include your contact information. For pre-printed fliers or brochures, provide a condensed version that can be directly inserted into the newsletter. Submission deadline is the fifteenth of each month. All submissions are subject to editing for space and content. All rights reserved by St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

### **ST. PAUL'S CHURCH COUNCIL & ASSISTING ADMINISTRATORS**

#### **Pastor**

Rev. Louise Mollick

#### **Officers**

President – Vince Jacobson  
Vice President – Mary Hromatka  
Secretary – Jeanne Moe  
Treasurer – Mike Mikulay

#### **Council Members At-Large**

Connie Hessevick  
Kathy Powers  
Eric Reishus  
Michael Smith (Youth Representative)

#### **Finance Committee**

Assistant Treasurer – Bernie Johnson  
Financial Secretary – Shirley Schaller

#### **Staff**

Administrative Assistant – Linda Dundas  
Choir Accompanist – Linda McGee  
Music Director – Steve Mollick  
Worship Accompanist – Rachel Mollick

#### **Facility Use Coordinator**

Mary Hromatka

#### **Webmaster**

Vince Jacobson

### **AUXILIARY BUILDING USE**

St. Paul's encourages use of its facility by groups that will support our mission statement. Examples are the 12 Step recovery programs, local neighborhood organizations, and congregations seeking a meeting place. Please contact us for more information if interested.

### **PUBLICATION**

*The Messenger* is a monthly newsletter published by St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church ELCA, 13207 Lake St. Extension, Minnetonka, MN 55305.

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

### Figuring it All Out

I realize that I don't need to make sense of all things spiritual. Indeed, I am fully aware that it is dangerous to BELIEVE that I could do so, but that doesn't seem to keep me from continuing to seek more and more knowledge.

*Think of me as a life long learner.*

It turns out that this has been the story since the beginning. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth and God created Adam in His own image. Then God provided a great place to live with spectacular surroundings. God wanted humankind to be happy and proceeded to provide all that is needed to be happy and guidance on how to use it. Thus began an eternity of servant-God making increasingly outlandish sacrifices to make this petulant creation happy. It began with getting him a woman.

And there was only one prohibited thing in this great place. It was the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And the humans thought, "Doesn't God want us to be knowledgeable? I'm sure He didn't really mean what we heard Him say." Humankind wanted to learn and grow in knowledge. They eventually rationalized that they probably had interpreted that prohibition incorrectly.

*Before original sin, there was original doubt.*

And they ate of the tree and they soon learned that they got exactly what they wanted, the knowledge that was prohibited; the end of innocence.

*Humans are naturally life long learners.*

And it then became clear that the tree of knowledge of good and evil prohibition was intended to protect them rather than to punish them, and they regretted their choice but realized there was no going back. As time passed, the regret dissolved, the lessons were forgotten, and willfulness again prevailed. Thus began an eternity of humankind's blind attraction to anything they do not have and their failure to consider its implications until it is too late.

Thus began an eternity of willful living and nostalgic longing for do-overs.

*Think of humankind as a life long learner with no retention.*

And the cycle began again, with the next tiny breadcrumb of prohibition and the next willful choice and the next regret.

Lately, I have been continually and repeatedly reminded of this recurring theme throughout the fallen history of humankind. Perhaps it's the season, or it may be the season of my life. Is it possible that some small parts of these lessons are retained and eventually build up enough mass to recognize them the next time we encounter it? Is it possible that our choices may be tempered by remembering, "I've already got a bruise there"? Is it possible that we could experience enough to begin recognizing implications of our choices before it is too late? I have to believe that, even in the absence of evidence. Is it possible that through Faith, we can begin to hear Christ shouting, "Step away from that! You'll regret it!"? I daily pray for that gift of listening.

On my journey, I continue to be driven to make sense of things. I think that is an unavoidable part of who I am, but I am less likely to BELIEVE that my conclusions are complete. I am making progress on hearing the loud warning cries. I can confidently say that I used to hear them as I smashed to the ground, but now I usually hear them just as I am stepping off the cliff; sometimes in time to step back.

I DON'T have it all figured out, but more and more, I'm OK with that. I am learning to value the mystery more than the prohibited knowledge.

Praise the Lord for His Grace, His love and His patience to be ready and willing to bail us out over and over each time we ignore the admonition to act in our own best interest.

Vince Jacobson, Council President



**Joy and blessings to all  
this Advent season and  
Christmas celebration!!**

*St. Paul's Council & Staff*

# COUNCIL NEWS

St. Paul's Church Council meets at 7:00 PM the second Tuesday of each month. Members of St. Paul's Community are welcome to attend and/or submit items for the agenda by contacting one of the council members.

## Council Meeting Highlights

**November 9, 2010**

### **Gathering:**

President Vince Jacobson called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. Present: Pr. Louise Mollick, Vince Jacobson, Jeanne Moe, Connie Hessevick, Mike Mikulay, Mary Hromatka, Kathy Powers. Absent: Eric Reishus, Mike Smith.

Prayer and opening meditation given by Connie.

### **Spiritual Nourishment:**

Connie led an exhilarating discussion of Chapter 7 "Daring to Expect Surprises" from *Reclaiming the "C" Word*.

### **Minutes of October Council Meeting:**

Mary moved to approve as written, Kathy seconded. Motion approved.

### **Pastor's Report for Council:**

- Pr. Louise reported on visitations/contacts with individual members.
- Pastor visited a student led group, Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) at Hopkins High School. It is a support group for kids who are gay. It is a strong support connection to feel safe. They want straight kids to be allies. Consideration given to opening up St. Paul's at designated times for their support gatherings. Pastor has started contacting Guidance Counselors in other west Metro high schools to initiate a similar program in each of the schools.
- Many visitors attended the Fall Festival held 10/30/10, many of whom were from the immediate neighborhood.
- Potluck 11/28/10 to include making of Advent wreaths and receiving Advent devotional booklets for use in the home.
- Thanksgiving Eve service at Mizpah with Bet Shalom; Pastor Louise preaching
- Five new members to be received at a December service.

- Motion moved by Mary to work together building a partnership with GSA initially with Hopkins school district and extending to west Metro schools along with Mainstreet School of Arts. Mike M. seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

### **Continuing Business:**

- Kathy discussed purchase of Christian children's books. Discussion included numerous means to finance; ask for specific donation, donation specified for each book, use of children's fund, etc. This dream is not to be impeded by money.
- Finance report reviewed by Mike M. Offering envelopes are in. Mike discussed plans for 11/21/10 Celebration of Stewardship lasagna dinner at 6:00 pm. It is a means to highlight outreach events with a summary of finances. Consider an alternative meeting time for those unable to attend this Sunday evening event; consider an afternoon. Mike proposed realigning Pastor's salary. Coffee monies designated for donations outside of budget. Budget will be proposed 12/10. Members are asking for "Christ in Our Home" devotional booklets; discussed combining our order with another church to minimize shipping costs along with consideration of specific donation.

### **New Business:**

- Two council member terms are nearing completion; Connie Hessevick and Kathy Powers. Kathy noted she would like to remain on council with Mary nominating Kathy for a second term. Council is still in need of a member to replace Connie. An announcement will be made during church service for those interested to serve on council.
- Annual Congregational Meeting planned for 1/30/11 after worship and at the Monthly Gathering/Potluck.

Connie gave closing prayer with adjournment of meeting at 9:20pm.

### **Note:**

Highlights are not official meeting minutes and are subject to correction and change. They are provided for timely informational purposes only. Approved final minutes are filed in a labeled green binder in the church office for your perusal.

## Treasurer's Report for October 2010

by Mike Mikulay, Treasurer  
952-933-9068

### From Financial Secretary's Report:

October Total Offerings	\$705 unfavorable to budget
October Total Operating	\$605 unfavorable to budget
YTD Total Offerings	\$3,062 unfavorable to budget
YTD Total Operating	\$576 unfavorable to budget
YTD Pledged Offerings	\$9,363 unfavorable to budget
YTD Non-pledged Offerings	\$7,119 favorable to budget

Note: Total Operating includes Total Offerings plus Coffee, Fundraisers, Interest Income, and Rent & Fees.

### From Treasurer's Report:

	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Variance
Income	\$150,528	\$151,804	\$1,276 unfavorable
Expenses	\$148,206	\$150,877	\$2,671 favorable
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$2,322</b>	<b>\$927</b>	<b>\$1,395 favorable</b>

\$121 from coffee donations in September and October will be sent to Feed My Starving Children.

**If you are current with your giving, thank you!  
If not, please catch up.**



### "Looking for Lucy"

is a most charming children's book written by the daughter of our very own Joyce and Roger Ramsden. Author, Emrys Current has graciously given St. Paul's an autographed copy for our library.



### October's ICA Food Challenge

was a wopping success! Together with November's Food Shelf Sunday of the month, St. Paul's donated 132 pounds of food to ICA. Thank you all!

### 2011



#### Offering envelopes

are available for pick-up in the narthex. Please pick yours up and help save postage.

#### Offering numbers

Numbers are assigned to those not ordering envelopes and necessary for accurate record keeping. Please pick up your assigned number card in the narthex next to the offering envelopes and.

## ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

**You are invited to St. Paul's Annual All Congregation Meeting  
Sunday, January 30, 2011**

The annual meeting will follow our January regularly scheduled Monthly Gathering and Potluck Brunch. Connie Hessevick and Kathy Powers' three year terms, as well as Mike Smith's one year term, will expire in 2011. Nominations for these openings are currently being accepted by St. Paul's council. Kathy Powers and Mike Smith have graciously offered to be re-elected if so desired by the congregation. Don't be surprised by budget changes next year; be a part of the 2011 decision making.

**Keep the date open for this all important event and be sure to attend!!**

## West Metro Youth to Meet at St. Paul's

For the last three years our transformational ministry team and church council have expressed an interest in serving the youth of our community. We have lamented over the issues that face them, but up until now had not discerned exactly what we could do. The recent rash of harassments and resulting teen suicides has convinced me that we can not wait.

During the past several weeks I have taken it upon myself to visit the Gay Straight Alliances (GSA) that meet regularly in our local high schools. I have met with counselors at the schools who do not offer a GSA for the LGBT students and their allies. I have listened to the needs of our young people who are continually subject to marginalization and bullying. Their stories are heart wrenching. It has become clear that we must do something! The time is NOW.

At our most recent council meeting it was agreed that beginning in December we will provide a safe and welcoming space for students from Hopkins, Edina, St. Louis Park, Eden Prairie, Minnetonka, and Wayzata high schools together with the Main Street School for the Performing Arts. There will be presentations on relevant topics by speakers, panels and through educational films and focus groups with plenty of time for dialog. And, of course, there will be the desperately needed time for socializing, giving students the opportunity to connect with each other and with us. This initiative will be student led with guidance from adult leaders. Initially I will be working with the students and their faculty advisors on programming, while others will be working on funding sources, organization and community impact.

As this ministry unfolds you will be called upon to serve in a variety of ways, your presence and your prayers are essential. Please open your hearts and make this a priority. Be prepared for a life changing experience!

Pr. Louise

## Dear Friends and Family-

I am still doing it! A couple months ago I wrote to you about an incredible trip I am doing. On January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2011 I will be traveling to Kenya and Tanzania to volunteer with Give Us Wings and then climb Mount Kilimanjaro.



Give Us Wings works together with adults and children in Kenya and Uganda to eradicate poverty. They support community development projects and the medical and education needs of the poorest of the poor in forgotten villages. Completing this climb will be a significant challenge. But even more significant is my goal of raising \$5,000 to benefit the building of a school for a Maasai village in the Rift Valley of Kenya as part of this trip.

We will be spending approximately four days in the Rift Valley laying the foundation for the new school and education center. This project is important. People who can read are more likely to find work, better able to look after their health and the health of their children, more likely to ensure their children go to school, and better able to hold their governments accountable. After we have laid the foundation, we will continue on to the next part of our challenge, climbing Mount Kilimanjaro.

For this challenge I need more than your encouragement -- I need your financial support. You have always been there for me in the past. Can I count on your support again this year? I have committed myself to raising \$5,000 for this incredibly important project.

Please learn more about this trip and make a donation at <http://www.razoo.com/story/Ryan-s-Mount-Kilimanjaro-Climb-For-Education> today.

To learn more about Give Us Wings and its mission, please visit them online at [www.giveuswings.org](http://www.giveuswings.org).

Thank you for all your support.

With sincere appreciation,  
Ryan Foss

## Preparing for Advent

The secular marketing season begins early, often before Halloween, and so the launch of Advent is kind of old news, rather than good news. It is old, however, only if we frame it and plan it as if it were simply a continuation or recapitulation of Christmas shopping and partying.

By contrast, the actual texts for Advent offer another vision, surprising and renewing, even shocking and challenging. For those of us who have grown weary . . . Advent presents an opportunity to re-visit the idea that the church year is not a never-ending cycle, but rather a deepening spiral, God hallowing and blessing time itself.<sup>1</sup>

One of the best known customs for the season is the Advent wreath. The wreath and winter candle-lighting in the midst of growing darkness strengthen some of the Advent images found in the Bible. The unbroken circle of greens is clearly an image of everlasting life, a victory wreath, the crown of Christ, or the wheel of time itself. Christians use the wreath as a sign that Christ reaches into our time to lead us to the light of everlasting life. The four candles mark the progress of the four weeks of Advent and the growth of light. Sometimes the wreath is embellished with natural dried flowers or fruit. Its evergreen branches lead the household and the congregation to the evergreen Christmas tree. In many homes, the family gathers for prayer or devotions around the wreath.<sup>2</sup>

## Midweek Advent services

Beginning December 1 at 6:45 pm, St. Paul's will be offering "*Prayers Around the Cradle*", a 20 – 30 minute service on Wednesdays during Advent. It is a gift offered for you to have quiet time, meditate, chant, center oneself, and focus on the reason for the season. **Please join us this Advent season.**

<sup>1</sup>SUNDAYS and SEASONS, 2011, Year A Guide to Worship Planning, Copyright 2010 Augsburg Fortress p. 19

<sup>2</sup>p. 24

## December Bible Readings

### December 5 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 11:1 - 10  
Psalm 72:1 - 7, 18 - 19  
Romans 15:4 - 13  
Matthew 3:1 - 12

### December 12 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 35:1 - 10  
Psalm 146:5 – 10 or Luke 1:46b – 55  
James 5:7 - 10  
Matthew 11:2 - 11

### December 19 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 7:10 - 16  
Psalm 80:1 - 7, 17 - 19  
Romans 1:1 - 7  
Matthew 1:18 - 25

### December 24 – Christmas Eve

Isaiah 9:2 - 7  
Psalm 96  
Titus 2:11 - 14  
Luke 2:1 - 14 [15 - 20]

### December 25 – Christmas Day

Isaiah 62:6 – 12  
Psalm 97  
Titus 3:4 - 7  
Luke 2:[1 - 7] 8 - 20

### December 26 – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Christmas

Isaiah 63:7 - 9  
Psalm 148  
Hebrews 2:10 - 18  
Matthew 2:13 - 23

## Nativity of Our Lord

You are cordially invited to join us for Christmas Eve worship.

### Celebration of Holy Communion

Friday, December 24<sup>th</sup>

4:30 PM



<sup>1</sup>SUNDAYS and SEASONS, 2011, Year A Guide to Worship Planning, Copyright 2010 Augsburg Fortress p. 19

<sup>2</sup>p. 24

## Our Saviour's Housing

- **December 13 is Project Homeless Connect.** PHC is a huge one-day event to connect those experiencing homelessness or other needs to services in a convenient environment. The last event served over 2,100 people! This effort requires well over 1,000 volunteers to work one-on-one as guides. No experience is necessary; they'll train you for a meaningful and fun day. To volunteer, please visit [www.homelessconnectminneapolis.org/volunteer.htm](http://www.homelessconnectminneapolis.org/volunteer.htm).
- **December 16 is the annual Homeless Memorial March and Service.** This is a really moving, important event honoring those who have died while experiencing homelessness in Minnesota. The memorial includes a silent march through downtown Minneapolis and then an ecumenical service. All are welcome to join for any part of the evening; more info at [www.simpsonhousing.org/news.html#memorial](http://www.simpsonhousing.org/news.html#memorial).
- **Holiday needs:** We are collecting donations and gifts for both Thanksgiving as well as the December holidays. Not only will your gifts brighten what can be a difficult time of year for our residents, but donations of basic supplies fuel our programs for months to come. This is a great way to connect your workplace, book club, family, or friends to

OSH! We're always happy to provide shelter tours or other learning opportunities for anyone with whom you want to share your volunteer work.

- **Holiday events at the shelter:** Our shelter stays open all day on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day. Residents from all of our programs are invited to come spend the day relaxing and celebrating. We still have some limited opportunities for volunteers to bring breakfast, lunch, or fun activities (such as Bingo, Wii, or movies) on these days. You're also welcome to come on your own for an hour or a few just to enjoy our residents' company and be a part of our community. Please let me know if you'd like to visit on any of these holidays.

Thanks for taking the time to give to our residents during the busy holiday season. We're so grateful for you now and year-round; you bring the energy, love, and resources that fuel our work.

### Colleen O'Connor Toberman

Volunteer Coordinator, Our Saviour's Housing  
 612-872-4193 x25  
[volunteer@oshousing.org](mailto:volunteer@oshousing.org)  
[www.osom-mn.org](http://www.osom-mn.org)  
[www.facebook.com/oursaviourshousing](http://www.facebook.com/oursaviourshousing)

## Saturday Grief Support

October 2 - December 11, 2010

West Metro Grief Support Coalition invites all persons experiencing grief due to a death. Grief support groups offer hope and healing through education, listening, sharing, prayer and fellowship.

**9:30 – 11:30 AM**

Gethsemane Lutheran Church  
 715 Minnetonka Mills Road  
 Hopkins, MN 55343  
 (952) 935-1753



DATE	SPEAKER	TOPIC
December 4	Video	To Touch a Grieving Heart
December 11	Michelle McConnell, MT-BC	Songs of the Season
December 18	Host Church	Participants remember their loved ones

For more information, please call the coalition co-coordinator Darcie Rodman at 763-546-4404 or find us online at [www.WestMetroGriefSupportCoalition.org](http://www.WestMetroGriefSupportCoalition.org)



St. Paul's Lutheran Church  
13207 Lake Street Extension  
Minnetonka, MN 55305

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Hopkins, MN 55343

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

**Please deliver within 5 days  
of December 1, 2010**



## **WELCOME STATEMENT**

**We at St. Paul's are committed to welcoming you . . .**

- If you are lesbian, gay, bisexual, intersexual, transgendered or straight.
- If you are seven, seventeen, forty-seven or one hundred and seven.
- If you are black, brown, red, yellow, white or any shade in between.
- If you are broken, healed or in recovery.
- If you are rich, poor, or somewhere in between.
- If you are able-bodied, disabled or differently-abled.
- If you have a strong faith, have doubts about your faith or aren't sure you have any faith at all.
- If you have accepted Christ's love, question Christ's love or don't know if you are loved.
- If you are looking for a church home, have never had a church home or need a place to find peace.

**We are committed to welcoming everyone, living as a reconciling people  
in our life together and in our outreach to the community.**