

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany
January 28, 2018

**IF GOD IS
FOR US
WHO CAN BE
AGAINST US?**

Rev. Arden Dorn, Transitional Minister

Rita Jordan, Organist

Randy Witte, Lay Reader

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Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

In Deuteronomy God promises to raise up a prophet like Moses, who will speak for God; in Psalm 111 God shows the people the power of God's works. For the church these are ways of pointing to the unique authority people sensed in Jesus' actions and words. We encounter that authority in God's word, around which we gather, the word that trumps any lesser spirit that would claim power over us, freeing us to follow Jesus.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The assembly stands.

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,
who stretches out the heavens,
who sends light to the nations,
who gives breath to us all.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin
in the presence of God and of one another.

Loving God,

we confess that we have turned from your way to follow our own ways.

Forgive us for the times

we have spoken or acted too quickly;

we have not spoken or acted at all;

we have hurt those closest to us;

we have hurt those we have yet to know;

we have thought more about ourselves than others;

we have thought less of ourselves than we ought.

Turn us around, and give us a fresh start,

so that we can live again as your children. Amen.

Even when we have done wrong, God makes us right.

Even when we have messed up, God puts us together.

God's love never runs out.

God never tires of calling us beloved children.

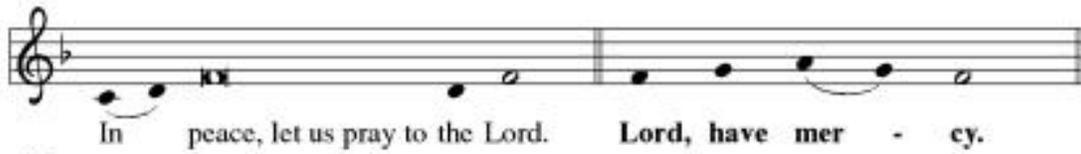
Hear God say to you now:

Your sins are forgiven, for the sake of + Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.



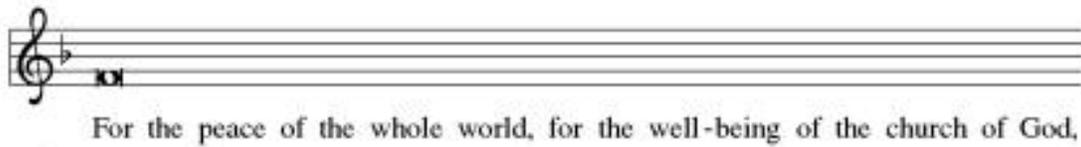
In peace, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.



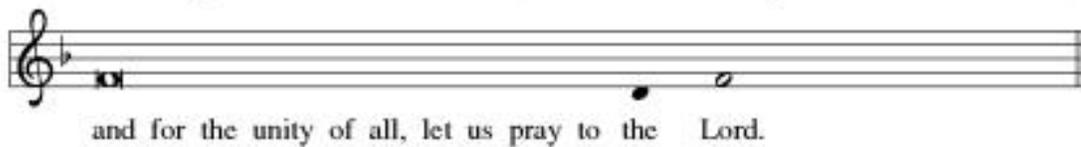
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



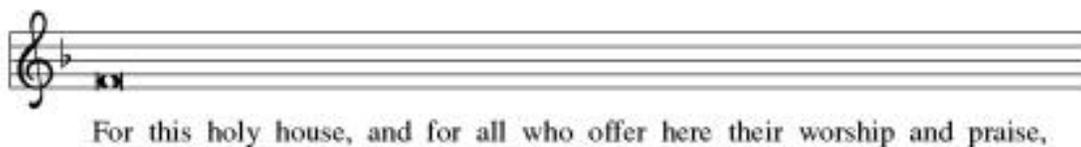
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



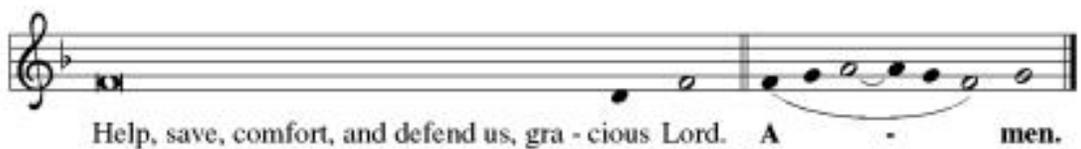
Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. A - men.



Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.



Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther,



we wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



you take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us;



you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.



For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Compassionate God, you gather the whole universe into your radiant presence and continually reveal your Son as our Savior. Bring wholeness to all that is broken and speak truth to us in our confusion, that all creation will see and know your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Dios compasivo, reúnes todo el universo en tu presencia radiante y continuamente revelas a tu hijo como nuestro Salvador. Traigan la totalidad a todo lo que está roto y digan la verdad a nosotros en nuestra confusión, que toda la creación verá y conocerá a su hijo, Jesucristo, nuestro Salvador y Señor. Amen.

The assembly is seated.

Word

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Today's reading is part of a longer discourse in Deuteronomy, an updating of the law for the Israelite community as the people wait to enter the promised land. Here Moses assures the people that God will continue to guide them through prophets who will proclaim the divine word.

[Moses said:] ¹⁵The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. ¹⁶This is what you requested of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: "If I hear the voice of the Lord my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die." ¹⁷Then the Lord replied to me: "They are right in what they have said. ¹⁸I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. ¹⁹Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. ²⁰But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak—that prophet shall die."

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSIVE READING: Psalm 111

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

¹Hallelujah! I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart,
in the assembly of the upright, in the congregation.

²**Great are your works, O Lord,
pondered by all who delight in them.**

³Majesty and splendor mark your deeds,
and your righteousness endures forever.

⁴**You cause your wonders to be remembered;
you are gracious and full of compassion. R**

⁵You give food to those who fear you,
remembering forever your covenant.

**⁶You have shown your people the power of your works
in giving them the lands of the nations.**

⁷The works of your hands are faithfulness and justice;
all of your precepts are sure.

**⁸They stand fast fore-er and ever,
because they are done in truth and equity. R**

⁹You sent redemption to your people and commanded your covenant forever;
holy and awesome is your name.

**¹⁰The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;
all who practice this have a good understanding. God's praise endures
forever. R**

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Paul is concerned about how some Corinthian Christians use their freedom in Christ as license to engage in non-Christian behavior that sets a damaging example to other, impressionable, believers. Christians have a responsibility to each other that their behavior does not cause a sister or brother to sin.

¹Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that "all of us possess knowledge." Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. ²Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; ³but anyone who loves God is known by him.

⁴Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that "no idol in the world really exists," and that "there is no God but one." ⁵Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords—⁶yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist. ⁷It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. ⁸"Food will not bring us close to God." We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. ⁹But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. ¹⁰For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? ¹¹So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. ¹²But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. ¹³Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

The assembly stands.

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO: Mark 1:21-28

Glory to You, O Lord!

The story has barely begun, and already the battle is joined. Jesus sides with humanity against every force that would bring death and disease. These forces recognize Jesus and know what his power means for them. This, however, is only the first fight. The war will go on much longer.

²¹[Jesus and his disciples] went to Capernaum; and when the Sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. ²²They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. ²³Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, ²⁴and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." ²⁵But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" ²⁶And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. ²⁷They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." ²⁸At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ!

The assembly is seated.

SERMON

Rev. Kathryn Gauger

The assembly stands.

HYMN OF THE DAY

(ELW p. 818)

O Master, Let Me Walk with You

NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;**

**he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,*
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Confident that God our light and our salvation hears us when we pray, let us offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all people in need.

For those who speak your word throughout the church in the world, O God, and for educational institutions that prepare leaders, that you will lift up prophets in our congregations, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For the works of God revealed in and through creation, for an end to pollution and unjust use of natural resources, and for good weather this season, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For peace and justice throughout the world (*especially*), for political leaders at all levels, and for those who provide public services, that you will grant them wisdom as they carry out their tasks, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For the homeless, the unemployed, the underemployed, and their advocates; for the sick, the suffering, and their caregivers; and for the weak in body, mind, and spirit especially for Elvira, Lorain, Pauline, Shane, Linda, Norma, Ann, Helen, Linda, Jack, Matilda, Steve, Evalena, Francis, Ella, Charles, Jim, Eli, Steve, Marlane, Yvonne, Mary Ruth, Kyle, Cody, and Norma; for caregivers and families; for those who grieve and cannot sleep, that comfort will come to those in any distress, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For those in our congregation celebrating special events, for those missing from our worship today, and for friends and family both near and far, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

In thanksgiving for the faithful departed who witnessed your love in their lives and in this world, that through them our own faith will grow stronger, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

Merciful God, you hear our prayers even before we speak them. Receive them for the sake of the one through whom you have revealed your goodness, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

With an awareness of cold and flu season, we will not shake hands among the assembly.

Meal

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.

The assembly stands.

OFFERING WORDS (ELW p. 186) *Create in Me a Clean Heart*

OFFERING PRAYER

Merciful God, receive the gifts we bring,
our selves, our time, and our possessions.
Through this meal unite us as your body,
shining with the light of your justice and mercy;
for the sake of him who gave himself for us,
Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Barmherziger Gott, empfangen die Gaben, die
wir bringen, uns selbst, unsere Zeit und unsere
Besitztümer. Durch diese Mahlzeit uns vereinen
als ihr Körper, scheint mit das Licht deiner
Gerechtigkeit und Barmherzigkeit; für ihn, der
sich selbst für uns gegeben hat,
Jesus Christus, unseren Herrn. **Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations; in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son; and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:

Blessed are you for the birth of creation.
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.
Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.
Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,
the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup
we remember your Word dwelling among us,
full of grace and truth.
We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.
We look with hope for his coming.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.

Come among us.

Bless this meal.

May your Word take flesh in us.

Awaken your people.

Fill us with your light.

Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours,
Holy One of Israel,
Word of God incarnate,
Power of the Most High,
one God, now and forever.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

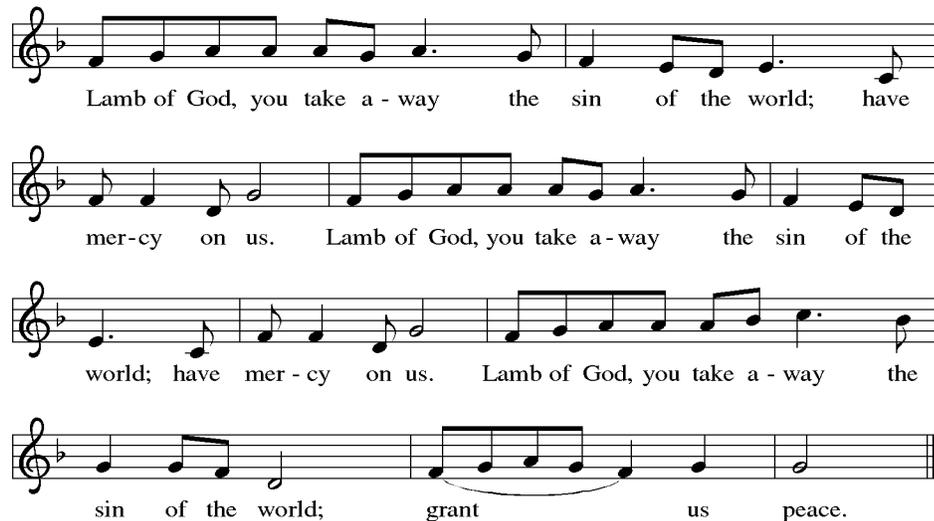
INVITATION TO COMMUNION

We who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread. Come. Be filled with light and life.

The assembly is seated.

DISTRIBUTION – All are WELCOME at the table of the Lord.

This meal gives you strength for your journey of faith & life. Go forward as the body of Christ in your family, community and the world. Children or anyone choosing not to commune, but wishing to be blessed, may indicate this by folding their arms across their chest. Anyone who is unable to come forward may indicate to an usher that you wish to receive communion where you are seated.



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

Following Communion, the assembly stands.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

O Morning Star, fair and bright, you have refreshed us again with heavenly food. You are our dearest treasure. Go with us now— today, tomorrow, every day— that we tell the story of your never-ending love and sing your praise both now and forever.

Amen.

Sending

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

The God of glory dwell in you richly, name you beloved,
and shine brightly on your path; and the blessing of almighty God,
the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN (ELW p. 638) *Blessed Assurance*

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Be the light of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

DOXOLOGY (ELW p. 884) *Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow*

Welcome!

We have all come to St. Paul's by different paths, and from various walks of life. Through worship, study, prayer and fellowship we each seek to deepen our faith, comfort and encourage one another and dedicate our lives more fully to sharing Christ in our homes, our community and the world. All are welcome at St. Paul's. We are eager to know you, and we invite you to get to know us.

A Nursery is located at the rear of the sanctuary in the overflow area.

If you are unable to hear, require a bulletin, or need any other assistance, please signal an usher.

For Prayerful Consideration

Ill or Injured

Elvira Boehm, Lorain Chandler, Pauline Davidson, Shane Edens, Linda Franke, Norma Foreman, Ann Gary, Helen Grimm, Linda Henning, Jack Hockey, Matilda Isaacks, Steve Kelly, Evalina, Francis Kempe, Ella Manka, Peyton Montemayor, Charles Pierce, Jim Pierce, Eli Rios, Steve Scotten, Marlane Smith, Yvonne Watkins, Mary Ruth Witte, Kyle Worthy, Cody Zaiontz, and Norma Zamzow.

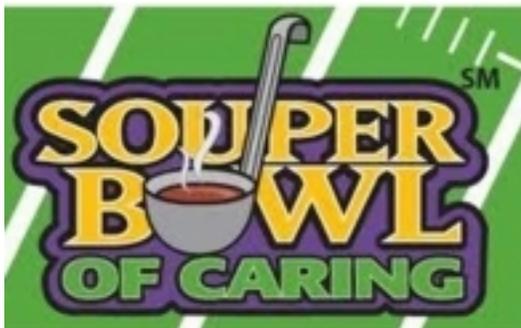
For those in the military

Nick Adams, Allen Bowles, Justin Chandler, Justin Elkins, Rodney Foreman, Jamaica Goodhue, Jacob Jones, Felipe Leal, Jr., Garrett Peterson, Michael Rosales, James Skinner, Chris Sustaita, Kassie Thompson, John Vasquez, and Delmiro Villanueva.

Birthdays

Lillian Martin (Feb. 2), April Thompson (Feb. 4)

Today we **WELCOME Pastor Kathryn Gauger** to our pulpit. Pastor Gauger served calls to congregations in Minnesota and Wisconsin before moving to San Antonio last December with her spouse.



CANNED SOUP, CHILI & STEW COLLECTION

Through February 4 we will be collecting non-perishable meals for the San Antonio Food Pantry. A collection basket is located at the rear of the Sanctuary.

Elvira Boehm continues to work toward recovery. Cards and letters from friends at St. Paul's brighten her day. She misses everyone terribly!

Elvira Boehm
c/o Betty Wilson
230 Sinclair Rd.
San Antonio, Tx 78222

NEWS FROM THE SOUTHWESTERN TEXAS SYNOD

IMPORTANT FEBRUARY CONFERENCE MEETINGS

Throughout February the eight conferences of the synod will be having special meetings. Along with conference business, there will be a presentation on behalf of the Strategic Planning Task Force about the synod's new Purpose Statement: God's grace transforms and connects us to learn, to love, to lead! There will also be a report on "Congregations Cooperating Together" and everyone will be encouraged to identify nominees for various elections – Ministry Team chairs for the Mission Team and the Leadership Development Team, Synod Council, 2019 Churchwide Assembly voting members, Discipline and Consultation Committees, and two nominees for the ELCA Church Council.

One particularly significant item is the pre-identification process for potential nominees for the bishop's election at the Synod Assembly on May 5-6. All members of a congregation of that conference may take part in this process. The goal of this process is to lift-up names of pastors who may have the gifts to serve as the next bishop of the synod. As each conference completes this process, the Elections Committee will contact all those named and ask if they would like to submit a photo and bio for the assembly website. Voting members to the assembly can then read that information in order to be better informed as they attend the assembly and go through the ecclesiastical ballot for the bishop's election. For the date and location of each conference meeting, ask your pastor or go to <http://www.swtsynod.org/assembly2018>

***"I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth,
do you not perceive it?" Isaiah 43:19a***

As we approach Lent this year, I am reminded that "fasting" has a long tradition in history. It has two meanings. The most popular definition is to "give something up" for Lent, whether that be chocolate or

Facebook. The other is not as well-known but is about “holding fast” to something, like your prayer discipline or family life.

In our Synod’s communication, we are giving up and holding fast beginning in February, and there will be a “new thing.” After 165 years of printed synod news, last month was the last edition of the Vista newspaper. It was difficult to give up this historical, printed Vista mailed to members homes, but costs kept increasing and the editor, John Dellis, couldn’t continue due to demands at his new job at the Lutheran Foundation of the Southwest (Thanks, John, for your years of service!)



However, we wanted to hold fast to keeping good communication within the synod, so “more frequent communication at less cost” seemed the wisest way of making this change.

Therefore, VISTAlite was born, a monthly insert for congregational newsletters that provides an opportunity for celebrating some events and anticipating others. Pastor Julie Rowe, the synod’s

Communications Coordinator, will be the editor.

This communication tool complements the weekly eNews that provides shorter-term updates on events and happenings. Anyone can register for eNews by going to the synod website at www.swtsynod.org and clicking on the eNews icon on the bottom right of that page.

As for Lent, I have until Ash Wednesday, Feb 14, to decide if I will give something up, hold fast to something or do both. Since Ash Wednesday will be Valentine’s Day. I doubt I will be giving up chocolate!

Peace, Bishop Ray Tiemann

FEBRUARY HAPPENINGS

Feb 3	Equipping the Saints	St Mark, Cuero
Feb 3	Senior Fest	Christ, Georgetown
Feb 5-7	Ignite the Church Conference	Orlando, Florida
Feb 9-11	Remix: A Modern Reformation HS Gathering	Camp Chrysalis
Feb 11-13	Lutheran Legislative Event	Austin
Feb 16-18	Racial Justice and the Church	Mustang Island
Feb 25	Bold Women’s Sunday	WELCA

