



THE MESSENGER

St. Paul Lutheran Church

Meet Marcia Buchs

Having served as a SAM at your congregation for several months now, I thought it might be a good time to introduce myself in a little more depth. Hopefully you have gotten to know me a bit through my sermons and interactions and may wonder what brought me to be a SAM, and ultimately, to serve you as a SAM. Hopefully the “What is a SAM” article in the last newsletter was helpful to understanding a bit about my role in your church.

It was what I call a Godwink moment that led to me to preaching for the first time in my home congregation in 2003. I was at the council president’s home (my brother) on Saturday night when the call came in that pastor had a medical emergency in the family and could not be at church the next morning. We tossed around a few ideas and eventually, I said that I had an essay ready for the church newsletter that wouldn’t take long to turn into a sermon. And rather serendipitously, my preaching career began. After that, I often filled in for our pastors for their vacations until years later in 2019, another Godwink moment happened. Pastor sent me an email noting that there was a SAM class coming up in Bloomington about preaching that was open to anyone. It was unusual for a SAM class to be held so close as they are usually in the Springfield area, so I decided to take it, just as an audit. It turned out that the instructor was inspirational and the 15 or so classmates, most of whom were SAM candidates, were welcoming and just a great supportive bunch and during the weeks of that class, I guess you could say I got the call.

I applied and was accepted but then I realized that I was going to be a year behind my peers who already had three classes under their belts. Fortunately, two of the pastors running the program were gracious enough to tutor me through what I needed to finish with my group and be ready to use my SAM at the same time I retired in 2021.

I feel very fortunate that my career experience has been so helpful in my work as a SAM. I graduated from NIU’s College of Nursing in 1978 and my nursing career has obviously given me much life experience from which to draw for sermons and church work. I have worked in hospitals and nursing homes. I spent many years as a hospice nurse and administrator in the Belleville, Illinois area. Later in my career after we moved back to my hometown, I worked as an in-patient addiction nurse and manager and ended my nursing career as the director of the Nursing Simulation Lab at Mennonite College of Nursing. In the middle of my nursing career I went back to school to be a health education teacher and spent four years teaching health at the junior high school in Pontiac. The farther along in my career I went, the more grateful to God I was that I was gifted with such a varied and interesting professional life.

I have come to understand that the gift God gave me that contributed most to my call to be a SAM is the gift of writing. I have enjoyed writing since I was in grade school. Many of us SAMs serve as supply preachers so sermon writing is vitally important. If one struggles with writing, it would be hard to be excited about composing sermons. And one reason I felt called to be a SAM was that as I wrote sermons in the years before I entered the SAM program, not once did the Holy Spirit fail me when I sat down to write a sermon. Because I was working full time, I would often write sermons in my head driving back and forth to work and then sit down on Saturday morning to put it to paper. I would usually know a month or so ahead of time when I was to preach, so I had lots of time to think about the text. That has obviously changed when I started preaching more regularly—needless to say, I don’t wait until Saturday morning to put fingers to keyboard these days!

I am a life long Lutheran and my early immersion in Sunday School, VBS, and confirmation class was very important to building the foundation of my faith. When we moved to the Belleville area shortly after we were married, we attended St. Mark through my twenties and thirties with a great pastor who helped my faith mature. When life got hard and my faith was tested, I was thankful for the early lessons and that pastor’s strong mentorship that brought me closer to God with a stronger prayer life. And now I find that writing sermons with my hearers in mind is when I am closest to God and most clearly hear his voice. I give thanks in so many ways for the opportunity to preach the Good News to you and sincerely hope that every Sunday I preach, I offer you something to ponder during the week that supports your faith journey as well.

In Christ, Marcia

The Third Article:
On Being Made Holy by Pastor Wayne



I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

What does this mean?

I believe that by my own understanding or strength, I cannot believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to him, but instead the Holy Spirit has called me through the gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, made me holy and kept me in the true faith, just as he calls, gathers, enlightens, and makes holy the whole Christian church on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one common, true faith. Daily in this Christian church, the Holy Spirit abundantly forgives all sins—mine and those of all believers. On the last day the Holy Spirit will raise me and all the dead and will give to me and all believers in Christ eternal life. This is most certainly true.

Did you notice the First thing Martin tells us about belief is an oxymoron of sorts? He states, I ***believe I cannot believe***. That is I cannot muster by any strength of my own nor am I able to reason my belief in Jesus Christ. This thing that I call faith comes from someplace else other than my mind or experiences. Faith says Martin comes by the work of the Holy Spirit. It is God the Holy Spirit that has called me to faith through the Gospel. In Jesus Christ God was reconciling us to himself through Christ. And ***gave us the ministry of reconciliation*** (see 2 Corinthians 5: 17- 19).

I also believe that it is by work of the Holy Spirit that I am holy because the Holy Spirit works through the Gospel (the Good News) of Jesus Christ. That this Holy Spirit enlightened me with his Gifts and by Word and Sacrament keeps me in true faith. But where does this Holy Spirit do this work? His work is done in the fact that God the Holy Spirit calls, gathers, enlightens, and makes Holy ***the whole Christian Church on earth***. It happens in places like rural parishes like St. Petri. It happens in town churches like St. Paul. It happens in parishes like Augustana Lutheran Church in St. Paul, Minnesota. It happens in the congregations of the Malagasy Lutheran Church (FLM) in Madagascar. Take a dart and throw it at a map and the Holy Spirit is at work calling, gathering, enlightening, and making Holy in Languages we don't understand amongst people who have different concerns than ours.

You see, God the Holy Spirit is much bigger than our parish, but in these parish congregations, he is at work making Holy. The Holy Spirit does through the gifts he has given ***you***. Paul speaks to a parish in Corinth with these words from 1 Cor 12:4, "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit given for the common good... All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually. Every day this Holy Spirit forgives sins- ***mine*** and those of ***all believers***. The Holy Spirit will raise ***me*** and ***all the dead***. This Holy Spirit will give to ***me*** and ***all believers*** in Christ eternal life. And the individual and collective (I) get to share in this ministry of reconciliation.



To parents of students in the 7th and 8th grade class range,

Since I am the interim pastor at St. Paul and St. Petri, I am trying to get a handle on how many children will be in confirmation class and how we would shape the class to meet all of our needs. If you would like to have your child in the confirmation class, please fill out the information below and send to me or leave it in my office. I will set up a meeting to figure out the best way to meet the needs of all.

Pastor O. Wayne Shelksohn

Confirmation Information Form

Students Name & Grade_____

Parents Names_____

Phone_____

Email_____

The people of St. Paul gather to worship, reach out, and serve the Lord.

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

September Birthdays

September 2 – Carrie Lueker
September 2 – Kathy Rygh
September 7 – Marian Brown
September 12 – Melissa Rapp
September 16 – Meghan Heller
September 17 – Dylan Delheimer
September 17 – Mary Highland
September 18 – Addison Bibb
September 18 – Jake Heller
September 22 – Mason Walsberg
September 25 – John Mehlberg
September 26 – Wendy Boch
September 28 – Megan Schott

September Anniversaries

September 6 – Larry & Tracy Leach (1980)
September 12 – Lucas & Addie Folkerts (2015)
September 15 – Lonny & Tonya Wilcox (2001)

Altar Flowers

A list is posted on the kiosk to sign up for altar flower donations. If you would like to donate \$25.00 toward the purchase of flowers in memory of or in honor of someone, please sign your name on the flower chart. Make checks payable to St. Paul Lutheran Church, noting "altar flowers" on the memo line.

Health & Wellness Sunday

Health & Wellness Sunday is the third Sunday of each month. Mary Leach or one of our parish nurses will be on hand before and after worship on these Sundays to check blood pressures and blood sugars, and to help you form questions for your health professional if needed.

Please sign up for St. Paul's Texting Service!

If you would like to receive text messages with reminders and special announcements, please sign up for the St. Paul Texting Service by completing the following:

1. Send a text to 81010
2. Text the message: @stpaul210



Rebecca Circle

The Rebecca Circle will meet on Thursday, September 15th, at 1:30 p.m. Maurine Gentes will be the hostess along with giving the devotions. Mil Girard will lead the lesson. The offering meditation will be given by Ginger Bauknecht. All women of our congregation are invited and welcome to attend this meeting.

Bibles & Bagels

The Bibles & Bagels group will meet on Thursday, September 8th at Edinger's Filling Station at 9:30 a.m. Any woman who would like to participate in an informal Bible study is welcome to attend this meeting.

Sunday Pastoral Schedule

September 4—Pastor Wayne Shelksohn
September 11—SAM Marcia Buchs
September 18—SAM Marcia Buchs
September 25—Pastor Wayne Shelksohn

LEO for 2022

LEO (Let's Eat Out) gathers St. Paul members and friends on the third Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. to enjoy dinner at area restaurants. All are welcome to attend!

September 21—Wolf Creek Golf Course
October 19—Pontiac Family Kitchen
November 16—LaMex Restaurant
December 21 —LOBO's Tap



Join us after worship as we serve our community and beyond!

Faith Fun Fest & Sunday School Kick-Off September 18

Join us after worship for a hot dog lunch
and games as we celebrate the beginning



BIBLE PRESENTATION SUNDAY