

PANTHER PATTER

A weekly newsletter of St. Paul's Lutheran School
December 7, 2018

Prepare the Way of the Lord

People make preparations often. As we approach Christmas, many are making preparations for family gatherings. While the weather was warm, many set up Christmas lights and displays in their yards and on their houses. Many shop for gifts for those dear to them. Some take time to visit nursing homes or care centers to sing Christmas carols and spread Christmas cheer. Members from area WELS congregations take time out of their weekends to present a live nativity to share Jesus' birth with the thousands of visitors to Riverside Park.

Isaiah 40:3 says, "Prepare the way of the Lord." How do we prepare ourselves to celebrate the birth of our Savior each year? Are our preparations in the traditions themselves? Below is a quote from Martin Luther's lecture on this phrase.

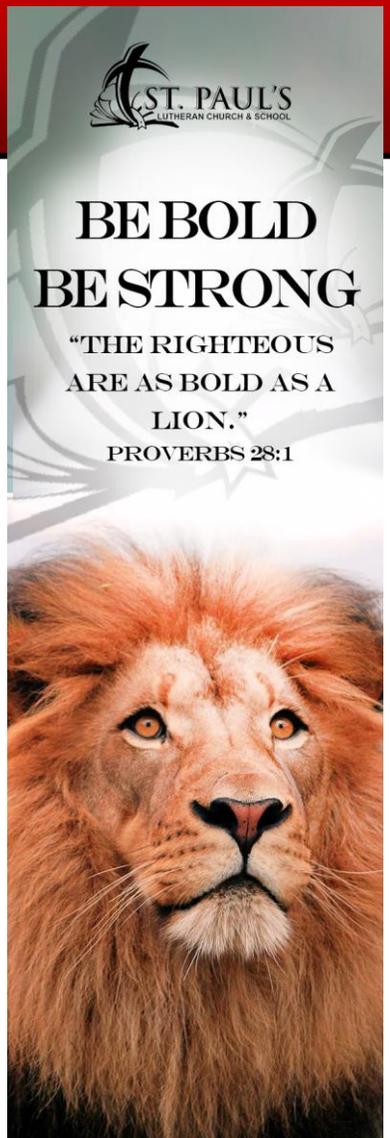
To "prepare the way of the Lord" is to take up a new life, the divine life. For way in Hebrew denotes a plan of life. Our writers, however, teach that this preparation consists in confession, fasting, and other works. These are the ways of humanity. To prepare the way of the Lord means to prepare ourselves for the Lord's activity in us, so that God may help us and our life may be the life of Christ. It is the way because people ought to have a heavenly way.

But how is this way prepared? To prepare is to clear out of the way whatever will be an obstruction. This preparation is nothing else than our humbling ourselves from our arrogance and glory. Those are the chief obstacles for the hypocrites, who walk in human ways and in their own presumption and do not accept the grace of Christ. To prepare this way, however, means to walk on it naked, without merits of any kind, in the grace of God alone and with the reception of gifts by faith.

Lectures on Isaiah *Luther's Works* 17, 8, (1527-30)

Again and again we see that our salvation is not about our works or deeds, but Jesus' perfect life as our substitute. He created the faith in our hearts, and He works through us to draw others closer to Him. May God richly bless you as He works through you this Advent and Christmas season!

Principal, Ben Bain



CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS SERVICE

The children will have their final rehearsal, Friday, December 15, at 9:00 am. We hope that everyone will be present. Please have your child dress up on Friday (no jeans and t-shirts). We will have guests and visitors joining us for this final rehearsal.

Great effort has gone into providing you with an atmosphere for worship prior to the service. Musicians and soloists have prepared some beautiful music and there also will be a time before the service when you will be asked to sing carols of Christmas. Please join in with the singing as you prepare yourselves for worship.

We are asking the children to arrive on Sunday, December 17 between 3:30 and 3:45 pm. If you arrive earlier than 3:30, please keep your children.

DECEMBER OPPORTUNITIES TO WORSHIP

Sunday, December 10

Sunday School Christmas Service, 10:30 am
Luther High School Christmas Concert, 2:00 pm

Friday, December 15

Dress rehearsal Children's Christmas Service, 9:00 am

Sunday, December 17

Children's Christmas Service, 4:00 pm

Christmas Eve

December 24, 6:00 pm (No 9:00 pm service)

Christmas Day

December 25, 9:00 am

New Year's Eve

December 31, 6:00 p.m. (with Holy Communion)



LIVE NATIVITY

St. Paul's members will join three sister congregations to give a public witness to the birth of Christ at Riverside Park Saturday, December 16, 5:00 – 10:00 pm and Sunday, December 17, 5:00 – 9:00 pm. This is an easy way to take the message of Christ's birth to the greater La Crosse Community.

SNOW DAYS AND SCHOOL CLOSINGS

As we get closer to those days when cold or snowy weather may cause school cancellations and early dismissals, we would like to remind you of the procedures we will follow. **First of all, unless there is a special emergency situation, you will never hear a specific announcement that St. Paul's Lutheran School is closed.** We will be closed if EITHER Onalaska Public Schools or Holmen Public Schools are closed prior to the beginning of school. They provide our transportation and therefore they determine if it is safe for us to have school. So, please listen to your local radio and television stations or sign-up for mobile text messaging at WKBT <http://www.news8000.com/weather/news-8-to-go> or WXOW <http://www.wxow.com/category/162467/interactive-radar> for weather alerts and announcements concerning public school closings.

The public schools also determine if there will be an early closing. Generally, we will only be sending students home early from the school district which closes early. Other students may also be released, **but only to their parents, and only if parents come to school and pick up their own children.**

On a rare occasion, one of the public schools may start late. If that happens, we will start on time and those children whose buses are running late will arrive at school late unless their parents are able to bring them in at the regular time. They will not be marked tardy.

Students who ride a Luther bus will not have bus transportation when Luther is closed and will need to provide their own transportation to and from school.

KISH BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

Girls finished in second place

Boys' finished in 1st place

Both teams received trophies.

(trophies are located outside the office window.)



Come and cheer on the St. Paul's Panthers Friday, December 8.