

St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church

Outreach Ministry Task Force Report Dec. 2008

Presented to Council – Dec. 17, 2008

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1. Introduction

This committee was commissioned by President Rick Grenzke to review the outreach ministries of St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church and recommend specific action items to expand the outreach of our church. Resources available were:

- The Master Plan Task Force Report from 2004
- Notes and minutes from a predecessor committee which looked at similar issues in 2006
- Report of the Renewing Worship Task Force (February 2006)
- Annual Reports and budgets from the last several years
- Various websites, including the ELCA and SEMI Synod websites

2. Mission

Our charge was to review the current activities of outreach ministry in terms of participation of members and monetary support, and recommend changes and improvements. The Guidance provided by President Grenzke sought the following information:

- Review of monetary spending from our annual budget and special funds
- Assessment of how our benevolence spending is allocated to community, local, national and international causes
- Level of participation to various outreach ministries
- Assessment of how well we communicate and promote outreach opportunities
- Recommendations for:
 - New outreach activities
 - Better promotion and communication of outreach activities (use of our church web site?)
 - Broad approach or concentrated activities
 - Any needed changes to our constitutional makeup to better meet our goals for outreach
- Report our findings to the Church Council by November 2008 so a program can be recommended for Congregation action at the January 2009 Annual Meeting.

The various activities of Outreach Ministry seem to fall into four general categories, which we used in our review and deliberations. They are generally local community, the broader Southeast Michigan community, areas that are different from us, and national and international outreach. We were inspired by the text and associated sermon by Pastor Harms that challenged the disciples:

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”. Acts 1:8

We adopted that as our guide in preparing us to be Christ’s witnesses in Jerusalem (our local community), in all Judea (Southeast Michigan) and Samaria (places not like us), and to the ends of the earth (national and international outreach of the ELCA and Global Missions).

3. Approach

Our approach was to review the current activities in terms of monetary spending and perceived level of activity in terms of number of people supporting the ministry. Generally there were no documented statistics on

numbers of people attending various activities, so most judgments were subjective. Budgetary information was available for recent years to assess monetary support. Comparisons were made in terms of percentage of our annual budget. It was noted that the Church Council has set an annual goal of 13% of budget for benevolence.

Interviews were conducted with selected individuals to assess activity if committee members were not familiar with the ministry.

4. Assessment of Current Situation

Various lists of outreach ministries were available from previous documents and reports. The committee developed the following list of current and recent outreach ministries of our church. The general format of our report was to provide **background** information on each ministry, **findings** related to current activities, **conclusions** on potential expansion or enhancement, and a **recommendation** for future action. The reports for existing outreach ministries follow.

Jerusalem

Pieces Be With You Quilting Ministry

BACKGROUND: The group was started about 7 years ago by Cathy Wrobel as a unique ministry for people who enjoy sewing. The group meets at the church on Tuesdays at 7 pm. Participation is open to all, including people who do not belong to our church. The current participation is about 15 to 20 women, with support from many members of our church for special projects.

OUTREACH MINISTRIES:

- Lutheran World Relief quilts and school supply bags.
- Quilt tops have been given to members of Salem who enjoy tying quilts but can no longer sew.
- Lutheran World Relief support generated by auctions of quilts made by the group.
- Quilts of Valor donated for distribution to wounded soldiers.
- Conquer Cancer pillowcases. These pillowcases are given to children in hospitals.
- Several internal ministries of baptismal quilts, graduation quilts, confirmation shawls.
- Sponsoring of Meaningful Monday services, Lenten dinners, and projects at the Advent Workshop.

FINDINGS: Support of the group has been generous, particularly due to the cost of the materials needed. The group offers quilting opportunities for anyone interested and at any quilting level of knowledge. Lutheran World Relief quilt kits are made available to all if interested in sewing at home. Opportunities to tie the quilts are offered at times outside of the regular meeting times, hoping to include all interested.

CONCLUSION: The quilting group offers many opportunities for the development of skills, outreach, and Christian fellowship.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Continue budget support for internal and external outreach ministries. Continue to be open to anyone seeking a Christian group to express their interest in quilting.

Thanksgiving Dinners

BACKGROUND: This is primarily a youth-based project that has been going on for almost 20 years. Initially the youth prepared a Thanksgiving dinner the Sunday before Thanksgiving and delivered it to the shut-ins of our congregation as well as names provided by LSSM. About 5 years ago, due to the closing of Calvary Senior Center, the youth began a relationship with Park Place Apartments in Harper Woods.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION: The youth feed between 75 and 100 people a beautiful Thanksgiving dinner with all the trimmings. This is a much anticipated youth event. The students have developed relationships with the residents of Park Place apartments and relish seeing the residents at this yearly event.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Continue to budget youth funds for this event. There have been years we have also caroled with the residents. These cross-generational opportunities should be continued and expanded.

Vacation Bible School (VBS)

BACKGROUND: Vacation Bible School is an ecumenical event that includes St. Paul Lutheran Church, St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church, Christ Church Grosse Pointe, Grosse Pointe Memorial, Grosse Pointe Congregational Church and St. Michael Episcopal Church. Each church takes turn to host the event yearly. VBS is for elementary and middle school children.

FINDINGS: Unfortunately St. Paul did not participate in this joint venture last summer. Volunteers from all the churches support this ministry and we do share the cost as well.

RECOMMENDATION: St. Paul should be encouraged to return to participation in this ecumenical ministry.

Support Groups

BACKGROUND: The following support groups currently use the church facilities

Alcoholics Anonymous (for Women)	Mondays – 7PM
Alcoholics Anonymous (General)	Monday thru Saturday 7 – 8 am
Gamblers Anonymous	Friday
Watch Breast Cancer Support	Monthly
Pointes for Peace	Periodically
Grosse Pointe Swim Team	As needed
Girl Scouts	As needed

FINDINGS: AA, GA and Breast Cancer Awareness groups make nominal payments for use of the facility. The other support groups use the facility free of charge due to members of the church that are involved in these groups. Over the years some members of these groups have actually joined the church and therefore have proven to be an extension of our outreach ministry.

CONCLUSION: These support groups provide a vital resource for the community at large as well as members of St. Paul and a valuable form of outreach.

RECOMMENDATION: Make the church available to other support groups that could also put St. Paul out there and expose the church to people that may not normally come to St. Paul. These groups can also meet some of the needs of church members.

Pastor's Discretionary Fund. This fund is available to our pastors to meet special financial needs of St. Paul members as well as non members. The fund is supported through donations and memorials.

Rummage Sale. This is an annual fall event sponsored and run by women of the church. Items sold are donated by church members or friends of St. Paul. Sale items, such as clothing and household goods, are priced low to help the needy in our community. All unsold items are then donated to other charities such as the Salvation Army, Pregnancy Aid, LSSM Refugee Resettlement, Arts and Scraps, Faith Lutheran and Christ Lutheran in Detroit. Electronics went to a recycling company. Funds raised are shared between needs within St. Paul and outreach beyond our congregation. The set up, sorting, sale and clean up are excellent opportunities for intergenerational activities.

Lay Theological Academy. St. Paul is one of 10 area churches supporting the LTA whose mission is to provide ecumenical education opportunities for adults. Pastor Harms and other members of St. Paul have been active members and participants.

CROP Walk. St. Paul and other area churches co-sponsor the annual spring Church World Service CROP Walk. Funds raised support local, national and international charitable organizations and activities.

Judea

Red Cross Blood Drives

BACKGROUND: Red Cross blood drives are supported by our congregation. A member of our congregation coordinates the community blood drives offered 4 times a year in the Grosse Pointes area.

FINDINGS: St Paul has been a long term supporter of this valuable outreach.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION: Continue to have a member of our congregation serve on this community project.

Arts & Scraps

BACKGROUND: Arts & Scraps is a local non-profit organization that recycles industrial and other scrap materials as innovative materials for art and educational projects for children and adults. It was founded by member Peg Upmeyer in 1989, and has grown to serve over 275,000 children and recycle over 20 tons of material a year. St. Paul has supported Arts & Scraps in several ways including direct monetary support from the church, through the local benevolence item in the church's annual budget, contributions from WELCA, direct monetary support from many members, members volunteering regularly on-site at Arts & Scraps and at community events,

members regularly donating items (top shelf of the coat room), and members supporting Arts & Scraps' annual auction by donating items, attending, and buying auction items.

FINDINGS: St. Paul's support has been considerable and much appreciated, but most activities to date have been on a personal basis. No group activities in support of Arts & Scraps, such as is done with Gleaners or Habitat, have been organized. There are volunteer opportunities for groups to build kits, restock shelves, or assist at community events (Dream Cruise, Festival of the Arts, Concert of Colors, etc) in which much needed work can be combined with fellowship.

CONCLUSION: Arts & Scraps provides many opportunities for group volunteering, which can be scheduled at Arts & Scraps on a regular basis, or at community events as needed. This would provide a visible outreach to the community and much needed assistance to a local agency.

RECOMMENDATION: Expand our relationship with Arts & Scraps to develop group volunteer opportunities at least quarterly.

Habitat for Humanity

BACKGROUND: St. Paul has supported Habitat for Humanity Detroit Chapter through two organizations: Habitat Grosse Pointe Partners (GPP) and Thrivent Financial for Lutherans through their Thrivent Builds program.

Habitat GPP is an organization of about 12 Grosse Pointe area churches that regularly volunteer and financially support Habitat Detroit. The Partners have a standing volunteer day on the second Saturday of each month, with opportunities for about 15 volunteers. Representatives from each church meet on the first Wednesday of each month to learn about current activities and develop fundraising and promotional activities. Habitat GPP tries to sponsor about one house (\$75,000) each year, and regularly volunteers to work on the houses. Construction is currently concentrated in the Morningside Commons neighborhood of Detroit just north of Mack and east of Alter Road.

Thrivent has become a major sponsor of Habitat locally and nationwide in recent years. Their model is to provide funding for about 70% of each house, expecting that the local affiliate will provide 20% and the local Lutheran churches will provide 10%, and that the local Lutheran community will provide substantial volunteer effort in constructing the house. St. Paul has been called upon for the local match in the last two years and has responded positively.

FINDINGS: St. Paul has provided budgetary support of Habitat GPP and Thrivent in recent years, and several members have volunteered for blitz builds and the Saturday volunteer days. St. Paul hosts the regular GPP monthly meeting and hosts the Saturday build about once per year. A special effort is made to recruit St. Paul volunteers for the Saturday build when we are the host church. Several members financially support Habitat GPP and Thrivent Builds.

CONCLUSIONS: There are several things that we could do to increase participation in building the houses and supporting Habitat financially. Suggestions include: Publicize and promote the Second Saturday builds, particularly when St. Paul is the host, but throughout the year. Publicize other volunteer opportunities,

including regular construction on Tuesdays and Thursdays for retirees and others who are available, committee work, hospitality at Blitz builds and on Saturdays, and office assistance. Organize a fund raising activity within the Sunday school or church as a whole to support a particular house. Regularly include Habitat in the Sunday adult forums to publicize the work of Habitat and inform the congregation of current activities. Local Habitat homeowners are available for speaking engagements. Encourage expanded support through budgeted items and through individual contributions.

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt one or more of the suggestions above to implement in 2009, and expand our commitment each year thereafter.

Capuchin

BACKGROUND: The Capuchin ministry is part of the Catholic Church. It provides 2 locations providing food and other essentials for those in need. The Connor facility offers meals Monday thru Saturday, breakfast, lunch, and dinner. This facility also offers community job assistance, clothing, tutoring, and special events. The Meldrum facility offers breakfast and lunch Monday thru Saturday. This facility offers showers and change of clothing to those in need. In the summer a garden is grown.

FINDINGS: Many types of outreach are available, including serving meals, sorting clothing, tutoring, gardening, and special events. The location of the Connor site is close to our community.

CONCLUSION: This organization has opportunities to assist for one time type volunteering as well as a more intensive commitment to tutoring.

RECOMMENDATION: Explore this ministry as a place to find many types of outreach close to our community.

Southeast Michigan Synod - ELCA

BACKGROUND: The Southeast Michigan Synod is our local Synod within the ELCA. As one of 65 regional bodies of the ELCA, the SE MI Synod empowers, supports, and serves its 134 area congregations and their members. The Southeast Michigan Synod is one people created by God, redeemed by Christ, and sustained by the Holy Spirit. We are a diverse part of a changing global community called to witness and serve in response to God's love.

The Synod provides administrative support, theological leadership, and governance of the congregations within the Synod. The synod administers the call process for clergy, is the voice of the congregations in the local media, and link to the national church and companion international synods. The synod maintains a full time staff and offices on East Jefferson in Detroit, and is supported financially by the member congregations. The synod provides support and assistance to the congregations and their clergy and lay staff, publishes a monthly newsletter, and plans and conducts annual gatherings in the form of Synod Assemblies and Church Days.

FINDINGS: St. Paul's financial support is an annual budgetary item, meeting guidelines provided by the Synod. Beyond financial support, our pastors and several lay members are active in the work of the synod. Pastor

Harms is a Clergy Dean, chair of the ELCJHL Task Force, and provides additional support assistance. Members have served on Synod Council, assisted with special projects, and volunteered with office support.

CONCLUSIONS: Support of the Synod should be encouraged and could be promoted more than it is. There are many opportunities to serve, including the following special ministries:

- [The Diversity Task Force for GLBTQI Concerns](#)
- [The Environmental Justice Task Force](#)
- [BR²ICK ~ Building Racial Reconciliation in Christ's Kingdom](#)
- [Acts In Common](#)
- [Church in Society Committee](#)
- [Women of the ELCA \(WELCA\)](#)

There are also opportunities to serve on Synod Council, as a volunteer in the office, and to be involved with companion synods, which are covered in a separate report.

RECOMMENDATIONS: We should continue to take a leadership role in our support of the SEMI Synod. We should encourage more active support of the SEMI Synod by our members. Our financial support should continue in accordance with Synod guidelines.

Living Water Ministries

BACKGROUND – Living Water Ministries is the camping ministry of the S.E. MI and N.W. MI synods. They have recently joined forces with the Episcopalian camping ministries as well. Living Waters owns two camps – Stony Lake and Michi-Lu-Ca. St. Paul has been sending students to camp for the last 15 years or so. The camps also offer year round programming for all different audiences.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS – While numbers of students attending camp fluctuate from year-to-year, this is an incredible experience for all who attend. For the last 10 years we have gone to Stony Lake. In 2009, we'll be spending a week at Michi-Lu-Ca. Currently St. Paul pays for ½ of the cost of camp for those attending.

RECOMMENDATIONS: This ministry should be encouraged by continuing to subsidize the camp experience for our third through 12th graders. We should also publish the other programming offered by Living Waters through the newsletter and website.

Lutheran Social Services of Michigan (LSSM). For many years St. Paul has budgeted \$4,000 annually for LSSM. It is the social ministry arm of the ELCA in Michigan's Lower Peninsula.

Gleaners Food Bank. Gleaners collects and distributes food to partner agencies (shelters, soup kitchens, food pantries and senior citizen centers). We support Gleaners through our local benevolence budget and by volunteering at the warehouse.

Crossroads. Crossroads is an ecumenical social service ministry providing a variety of services and assistance to those in need. We support Crossroads through our local benevolence budget and by collecting nonperishable foods for their food pantry.

World Medical Relief. WMR is a nonprofit charitable organization that collects donations or purchases medical supplies and equipment for distribution locally, nationally and internationally. We support WMR through volunteer work trips to the warehouse.

Monetary Support. Several local organizations are financially supported through our local benevolence budget of \$8,000 for 2008.

Samaria

Salem Outreach Ministries

BACKGROUND: Salem Memorial Church is located on Moross in Detroit. In spite of declining membership, the congregation has initiated a number of outreach ministries. These include:

1. Parish nursing which has sponsored the following events.
 - a. 3 Red Cross blood drives a year.
 - b. Senior physical and mental exercise classes on Mondays
 - c. Lunch and Learn monthly classes.
 - d. A community Health Fair.
 - e. Yoga classes
2. Food Pantry. Food is available to people walking in asking for help. Currently it is stocked by the congregation. A spaghetti dinner is planned for November 14 to fund and stock the pantry.
3. After school program 3pm to 5pm offering games and crafts. A member of our congregation Emily Bendure is working on this.
4. Thursday night basketball. The church has a full gym and it is offered for community groups to use.
5. Community Trunk and Treat event.

FINDINGS: The community surrounding Salem has changed in demographics. This congregation has offered its building for many community outreach programs. The programs have been focused on the community needs and demographics.

CONCLUSION: Many local community outreach opportunities need support at Salem.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Further our research to determine how we could support this small congregation. Due to the close location and many ties to this church, this would be a wonderful opportunity. Work with Salem to determine how best to help with the food pantry. We may also want to look at combining youth events.

Gateshead Project

BACKGROUND: The former Calvary Senior Center has been torn down to make way for a 45 unit independent senior living center. This center is currently under construction, with anticipated opening spring of 2009. LSSM feels there will be outreach opportunities when the new facility opens.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Await the opening and determine opportunities at that time. This may be an opportunity for an expansion of the yearly Thanksgiving dinner project.

LSSM refugee support

BACKGROUND: LSSM is currently working with refugees from Iraq. These are people originally from Iraq, but have left Iraq and seek to come to Michigan from another country such as Syria. Prior to their arrival in Michigan they have been through a screening process and must have a close relative here willing to sponsor them. LSSM initiates an assessment interview when they arrive to determine needs. Each refugee is given a monetary sum of \$425.00 to begin to settle into this area. Assistance is provided in job searches, obtaining public assistance such as food stamps or Medicaid, finding housing, and obtaining household goods.

FINDINGS: Opportunities exist to assist refugees settling into our community. Specifically mentioned areas for volunteer assistance are:

1. Donations of household goods. Mattresses are especially needed.
2. Assistance with the transportation and storage of these goods.
3. Assistance in the office working with refugees, especially Arabic speaking help.
4. Assistance with transporting refugees to appointments.

CONCLUSION: This is an opportunity for international outreach, allowing the refugees to live and settle in a safe community.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Our rummage sale collections could continue to offer much help. Another possibility would be to sponsor a family(s).

The Ends of the Earth

International Companion Synods

BACKGROUND: The Southeast Michigan Synod ELCA has two active companion synod relationships: the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL), and the Mbulu Synod in Tanzania. St. Paul has been active in both relationships, first with the Mbulu Synod, and more recently with the ELCJHL.

FINDINGS: We have a wonderful opportunity to learn about Christian faith journeys very different from our own, and support them in their mission and growth.

- ELCJHL. We have a developing relationship with our sister congregation in Amman, Jordan, and will expand that with a trip by several members in the fall of 2008. Pastor Harms chairs the Synod's Task Force for the ELCJHL, and several members of the Congregation have traveled to the Holy Land and have brought the story back to Southeast Michigan. There is an urgent need for advocacy for a just peace in the Middle East, by voicing the Palestinian perspective and understanding the Jewish perspective, and to raise awareness of the plight of the Palestinians, and particularly our Lutheran Palestinian brothers and sisters.
- Mbulu Synod, Tanzania. The Mbulu Synod is one of two companion synods to the SEMI Synod. Several members and past members have traveled to Tanzania, and many members have supported the Lutheran schools, hospitals and congregations in Tanzania. Lois Rimbo was an ardent supporter of the Dongobesh School, and recruited many members to support students through a scholarship program. Several members have traveled to Tanzania and many from the Mbulu Synod have traveled to Southeast Michigan. Several members participated in the container project several years ago in which three 20-foot cargo containers of goods were shipped to Tanzania from Southeast Michigan.

CONCLUSIONS: We could expand our outreach related to the ELCJHL by 1) adding lay membership on the ELCJHL Task Force, 2) encouraging more members to travel to the Holy Land and learn about the situation there, 3) sponsoring some members of the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Amman to visit us in Southeast Michigan. 4) publicizing talks, discussions, and seminars about the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, 5) strengthening the relationships between the two congregations by raising up prayer concerns from each congregation, noting worship times (which generally coincide because they worship at 6:30 pm with a 7 hour time difference), developing email exchanges between members in each congregation, sharing member profiles, etc. More ideas for developing the relationship will emerge as the relationship grows.

Many members still support the Dongobesh School through a scholarship program run by the synod. However, ongoing support for Tanzania needs an advocate to lead the congregation's efforts to support the Mbulu Synod. The zeal to support Tanzania has waned in the last couple of years with the departure of Lois Rimbo and the emerging interest in the ELCJHL.

RECOMMENDATIONS: With the current leadership from our pastors we should develop and build on the following opportunities:

1. Build on the upcoming trip to the Holy Land to strengthen our emerging relationship with the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Amman, Jordan. Trip participants should return with solid ideas for exchanges, opportunities for mutual support, and other means of building the relationship between the two congregations.
2. Develop an ELCJHL support group within our congregation to support the Synod Task Force and be a voice to our congregation regarding a just peace in the Holy Land.
3. Recruit an advocate for our congregation's support of the Mbulu Synod, particularly the Dongobesh School.

Sierra Leone Association of Michigan (SLAM)

BACKGROUND: The organization was established by people of Sierra Leonean descent in Michigan and the surrounding area such as Windsor, Canada and Toledo, Ohio. Primarily, they raise funds to support various causes in Sierra Leone and occasionally support members in need here in Michigan. Originally from Sierra Leone, Pastor Collier is heavily involved in the organization and for several years he was the President. He is now the Secretary of the Organization and strongly continues to support the organization. Members of St. Paul have strongly supported the efforts of the organization. Last April the organization had their Independence Day Thanksgiving Service at St. Paul and served lunch.

FINDINGS: The organization has forged a loose connection with members of St. Paul through Pastor Collier's involvement. The organization would like to establish a better connection with St. Paul and in return create an opportunity for outreach ministry.

CONCLUSION: This is a viable organization that St. Paul can reach out to and establish a stronger relationship through outreach ministry.

RECOMMENDATION: The church can do joint ventures such as fund raising and making the building available to the organization for future use. We can invite the organization to address adult forum from time to time in order to keep us informed of current events in Sierra Leone and locally.

ELCA Disaster Response/Hunger Appeal

BACKGROUND: It is meant to respond to national and international disaster through congregational donations especially long after the actual impact is over. The ELCA is responsible for dispensing monies raised to needed disaster areas. In the past St. Paul has designated special offerings to this ministry. There is a website for ELCA Disaster Response with lots of information.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION: This is a vital ministry and we should continue to support it.

International Ministry - Liberia Outreach Ministry

BACKGROUND: Interestingly, the Lutheran Church in America first attempted to organize missionary work in Liberia in 1860. Later on the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Liberia (ELCL) was established in 1947. Today the Lutheran Church of Liberia has approximately 71,000 members, 40 parishes with over 50 congregations and more than 150 preaching points scattered in twelve of the 15 political subdivisions of Liberia. The LCL is widely known for its educational and health care ministries. St. Paul is one of several churches that support the missionary work of Ms. Betty McCrandall in Monrovia, Liberia. Last year Ms. McCrandall visited St. Paul and she was able to share with us some of her work in Liberia.

FINDINGS: Ms. McCrandall taught high school in Liberia and at another time she was a hospital secretary. Presently, she serves in the Central Office of the Lutheran Church in Monrovia writing project proposals and other managerial activities. Last year St. Paul contributed \$8,000.00 to this ministry and we continue to have an active relationship.

A member of St. Paul is originally from Liberia and alerted us that there is a viable Liberian organization here in Michigan. The organization primarily engages in fund-raising activities to support various projects in Liberia as well as Liberians here in Michigan. The fact that we are supporting a missionary in Liberia and we also have a Liberian Member in the church creates an opportunity to make our presence known in the community.

CONCLUSION: Our support for the missionary work in Liberia exposes St. Paul to outreach ministries directly and indirectly in Liberia. Based on our findings, the health care and educational ministries are two of the vital outreach ministries that we can support. The fact that one of our members is from Liberia puts a personal face to this ministry and he will be better able to assist us with future ventures in the local Liberian community.

RECOMMENDATION: We should continue to further our involvement in the missionary work in Liberia and the local organization by learning more about the ministry. Maybe in the future we can support them through clothes and book donations. The youth and adults in the congregation should be encouraged to participate in such projects so that they can have an idea as to how our donations are spent. The congregation can keep abreast with events in Liberia and the local community through occasional presentations in adult forum and our newsletter.

Fair Trade Coffee. FTC is being used at St. Paul for coffee hour and programs. It is also available for sale. Purchase of Fair Trade Certified coffee, tea, cocoa and chocolate supports small farmers worldwide by assuring fair prices for their products

5. Vision of the Future

Ideas for New Outreach

Third Worship Service

BACKGROUND: A Renewing Worship Task force studied this topic extensively and reported to Council in February of 2006.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS: The Renewing Worship Task force recommended to council that a third service be added on Monday evenings with a paid worship leader. This project went no further than this. Council did not take any action. It is time to revisit this idea.

RECOMMENDATIONS: From an outreach point of view this is an exciting idea and should be studied further.

Men's Ministry - Wood Work Ministry

This particular suggestion is recommended for men in the church that could include every demographic. The woodwork Ministry could be in similar fashion to the Quilt Ministry. We have a few members in the congregation who do woodwork. They could be encouraged to lead this ministry as well as teach and encourage other interested members to join the group. It could be a learning experience for members that are interested in woodwork, but lack the skills, and in addition create an atmosphere of camaraderie and fellowship.

This ministry could engage in providing a treasure box for special occasions such as baptism, confirmation and marriage just as the Quilt group provides quilts for high school kids' graduation and during hospitalization of members. Another project can be picture frames for special occasions in our faith journey. Similarly this group can be open to non-members of St. Paul and advertised to the members of the various organizations that use the church facilities.

In addition, this ministry can be environmentally friendly by recycling used or old furniture and repurpose them for other uses. We can also speak to the importance of recycling and preservation. For example some of the unsold furniture from the Rummage Sale can be saved for use in this ministry and be donated to needy organizations such as Women's Shelters and Homeless Shelters.

The Woodwork Ministry can address the lack of programs primarily for the men in our midst and could also seek to bridge the generational gap. Young men can learn from the adult men in our congregation while fellowshiping at the same time. Based on our research some churches have also used this ministry as a fundraising activity. This can be explored down the line.

Lutheran Men in Mission: LMM is affiliated with the ELCA and encourages and motivates men in the congregation to build a strong relationship with Jesus Christ by participating in Bible study, service missions and other ministries in the church. The group also provides resources to assist congregations in developing effective men's ministries. St. Paul can benefit from such affiliation especially since we do not presently have a strong men's group. Such affiliation can support future men's ministry in St. Paul and within our immediate community.

Foster Child Support

Another recommendation for outreach is foster child support. The youth groups or the retirees in our midst can choose to sponsor or support a local child in the community or internationally. This child can come from our sister congregations in Tanzania, Palestine or from Sierra Leone or Liberia. The group can watch the child grow up by exchanging letters and learning about the living conditions of the child and the particular country. The group can update the church on the progress of the child from time to time through Adult Forum presentation, through our Newsletter and praying for them in our prayer groups.

Prayer Companion:

Although we do have an active prayer group in the church we could expand this ministry further by having one or two members of the prayer group pray with members of the congregation in between services and after the second service for personal urgent needs. This time can be an intimate session geared toward any specific issues in the member's life requiring special prayers. It could be prayers of thanksgiving, illness, difficulties at home, and even for family members that are not members of St. Paul. We could advance this ministry by encouraging youths in our midst to have a similar set up to pray for their peers in this special way when they are approached. The kids in turn can let their friends know that they can come to St. Paul to seek special prayers for their particular situations.

The ELCA website has vital information on prayer that could assist the prayer companion ministry if established - <http://archive.elca.org/prayer/resources/advance.html>. The website provides information to advance a prayer ministry and other valuable resources such as a prayer banner.

Outreach to Young Adults

- 1.) Akaloo life groups are intentionally informal and cross generational. They work well for people with young children (which some of our 30's have) as it's intended for the entire family to meet together for a meal/refreshments, a sharing of prayer concerns, and a brief devotion.
- 2.) Theology on Tap is a program that I've heard of some churches having great successes with. We open it to anyone interested, but specifically target our young adults with the promotions. The goal is to get together at a local establishment (possibly Dragonmead?) and have a conversation about some theological issue. The idea is not to do "Bible Study" as much as to get people talking about issues that affect faith. This may be a good place to discuss some of our more "controversial" and current issues facing the church, as well as some of the old stand-by topics like grace vs. works, Christian vocation in a secular world, etc. I would like to see us start with either a monthly or twice a month program with the idea that it may eventually become a weekly event.

- 3.) Improved communication would greatly benefit this group in the areas of email notices and possibly a St. Paul Facebook Group. (Many 20's are now checking facebook more often than their own email.) Through better use of communication technologies, we can possibly get more of our young people involved in regular events like Gleaners, special worship events, etc. We may also want to sometime in the future explore investing in services that allow multiple text-messages to be sent at one time. This would allow us to send reminders directly to individual cell phones the night before any event.

Growth of Current Activities

The Outreach Task Force committee's recommendations are included at the end of each topic. For any current or future outreach project to grow and prosper a champion(s) of that particular ministry must be identified and given the tools for growth. As a congregation we have already added two powerful tools to our tool belt for outreach ministries: the new website and the weekly email updates. These two communications devices will be very important in educating and updating our congregation and the community about outreach opportunities available through St. Paul.

Respectfully submitted by the Outreach Task Force, December 2008

Patricia Collier – chairperson

Gretchen Archinal

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Appendix 1

St. Paul Lutheran FINANCIAL OUTREACH
Calendar Years 2005, 2006, and 2007
as of May 9, 2008

	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>
ELCA Missionary	\$ 6,500	\$ 7,000	\$ 8,000
ELCA General Treasury	40,000	44,000	47,000
Lutheran Social Services of MI (LSSM)	4,000	4,000	4,000
Local Benevolence (various each year)	5,000	6,000	8,000
Other Benevolence *	4,116	1,249	1,290
S.E. MI Synod Capital Campaign	13,000**		
Lenten Offering (coin folders)	1,365	849	1,036
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	4,927	5,498	4,997
Fair Trade Coffee, cocoa, chocolate	515	1,327	954
Lenten Dinners – Thrivent matching events	721	1,118	721
CROP Walk	- 0 -.	2,291	4,152
Women of the Church (WELCA)	6,315	7,719	6,900
Treasurer's Clearing Account Misc.	2,655	1,987	850
Totals	\$89,114	\$83,038	\$87,900

* Could not readily identify 2005 amount. 2006 funding went to ELCA, and 2007 funds went to church in Amman, Jordan.

** 2005 was the last year of a St. Paul Capital Campaign

NOTE: There are other activities for which no dollar value is reflected, such as: food donations to Crossroads East. The Giving Tree gifts at Christmas, Bell Choir Concert offering, and Pieces Be with You Quilt Group (LWR quilts, quilts for flood victims, veterans quilts, purchase of LWR paving block).

Appendix 2

Woodworking - <http://www.epiphany-herndon.org/woodworking.htm>

What's the Epiphany Woodworking ministry all about, anyway?

A place for men to get together...

- To learn
- To create
- To share
- To build relationships
- To teach
- To serve

....while having fun with wood tools and power tools.

Why Woodworking?

An essential element of Christian fellowship is just getting men together. Men will come together for a good reason, for a mission, to learn or for fun. Woodworking can be any of these, and it is an effective way to get men of the church together, as well as a means to invite others from the community to share in projects of interest.

This ministry is part of the Epiphany ministries for men, and supports the men's ministry goals of fellowship and service. The Church benefits directly from this ministry, as is already evidenced by the sign-up tables which were designed and completed through the combined efforts of seven men of the Church.

Projects?

The realm of projects is large, perhaps including build out of custom shelving in the library. Some men have started building a canoe. We've made wooden swords for the Battleground and Field Training ministry. Other ideas include individual projects, workshop/tool training, father/son projects, and support to drama, scouting, VBS or other ministries of Epiphany.

Who and When?

Safety is our #1 concern. A Woodworking Advisory Board establishes and enforces safety requirements, approves and schedules all projects, and ensures appropriate leadership for each project, as well as appropriate supervision of each work session. Each project leader determines the schedule for his project.

Where?

Until plans are in place to finish out the third floor of the classroom building, the woodworkers have set up shop in the northwest corner of the education building.

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving."

Colossians 3:23-24

Epiphany Woodworkers was established as an element of the men's ministry at Epiphany in November 2006. Oversight for safety, project approval and scheduling is provided by the Woodworking Advisory Board.

