

# The Epistle

## Paul Owens, Senior Pastor



### HOLIDAY TABLE TALK

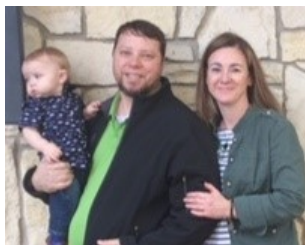
Turkey with all the fixings... or slow smoked brisket and the sides... or a rib roast and twice-baked potatoes. Whatever you put ON your Thanksgiving and holiday dinner tables, the conversations that happen AROUND them are just as important... If not more. Social wimps and shallow friends are content to talk about the weather, sports and gossip. Jesus Christ did not die and rise so you and I could stand safely in such shallow, stagnant waters. He calls you and me to engage with love and truth: to swim out into the deeper water... that's where the real refreshment finally comes. You might be looking forward to deep conversation with family and friends... Or you might be dreading them. Whatever the case, you are beloved to Jesus and as your Lord he calls you and equips you with exactly what you need for these conversations. Here's a little help as you gather and engage with your loved ones:

**Difficult conversations are important;** they show that you care. Calmly invite the conflict onto the table; Jesus ALWAYS did... and keep it civil and loving under his lordship. Your emotions are bad clothing, so don't put on your "bossy pants" or your "wussy pants." Instead, as St. Paul says, "put on Christ... speaking the truth in love is the only way we will ever grow to maturity in Christ" (Ephesians 4:15). When the conversation gets difficult or disagreeable, remember to ask:



1. What do each of us think this conversation is about?
2. What has each of us contributed to the conversation?
3. How does God see each of us? Answer: as fallible and needing and worthy of his forgiveness.

(For more about "difficult conversations" see the book, with the same name, by Doug Stone, Bruce Patton, and Sheila Heen). Jesus has plenty of grace for you, your family and friends, and for all your difficult and deep conversations. Go ahead, ask him and trust him for it. Your dinner will taste better... and you might even enjoy doing the dishes side by side.



The Bakers, Matthew and Angela, have a son, Canyon, who just turned 1 year old in September. Angela is an RN at Resolute Hospital. Matthew is an Instrumentation and Value Technician. Angela enjoys traveling and quilting, while Matthew likes to hunt and loves being a dad!



LaVerne Johnson is a retired English teacher who is married to Michael, a retired Border Patrol Officer. They have 2 grown sons and one grandson. LaVerne enjoys creating arts and crafts projects, traveling, and dinners with friends and family members.

## Welcome to our New Disciples

Picture not available.

The Braunes, Dean and Erika, have a daughter, Kassie, who is a 5th grader. Dean is a salesman for GCR Tire and Erika is a Customer Service Representative for the Mund Group. Some of their shared interests are spending time with family, hunting, fishing, and camping.

*As a Christ-centered, Gospel-driven Congregation, we are called by our Lord Jesus to go and make disciples*

*of all nations. We will be a congregation that engages people in order to help families follow Jesus.*

\* Promote a culture of family ... supporting home prayer & Bible study with parents as key teachers



### *John Magness, Congregational President*

From the President: “And you [we], who were dead, ... God made alive together with Him, having forgiven all our trespasses ... nailing it (our debt) to the cross.” Colossians 2:13-14. Think on this.

First, a WOW on WOOW. Thank you Emily and Congregational Life Board. I have heard wonderful stories about reaching out at this event. AND a big welcome to our new disciples. Next, another big welcome to M'Lissa Steel who has stepped forward to be the Congregational Life Board Director. We have a Semi-Annual Congregational meeting this month. The agenda includes the following topics:

- 1) June 2017 minutes
- 2) Financial Report
- 3) 2019 Spending Plan for Ministry (Budget) (printed material available in Narthex or Lobby)
- 4) Emergency Fund Resolution for 2019
- 5) Proposed Constitution and Bylaws Changes (printed material available in Narthex or Lobby)
- 6) Ratification of M'Lissa as the Congregational Life Director
- 7) Delegate Report on LCMC Annual Gathering

Your Congregation Council recommends approval of all items.

Finally, I encourage you to review the available material beforehand. If you have questions that could be answered before the meeting, kindly contact me or Treasurer Susan Montgomery (for financial matters). We are ready to explain/help. I pray God's peace for all of us and I pray for a great Semi-Annual Congregational meeting.

### *My Stewardship Story – Why I Tithe*

Growing up, my family did not attend church so I had almost no experience with tithes/offerings. My parents were quite reserved about their finances and my only memories of charitable giving involved donations to Goodwill, Salvation Army, and March of Dimes. When Jenny and I got married in 2000, we began attending church regularly. From that time, until our son was born in 2003, we were well-positioned financially. At church, we were giving, but doing it in such a way that we didn't “feel it” in the pocketbook. At the age of 35, shortly before our son was born in 2003, I was convicted to be baptized. As the saying goes, I became a new creation, and my faith walk began in earnest. However, by late 2006, we were still not giving generously and our finances were in decline as a result of expenses relating to our son's medical condition, funeral & burial expenses related to his death, and medical expenses relating to the birth of our twin girls in 2005, and ongoing medical expenses relating to one our daughter's medical condition. By the end of 2006, we had decided that I would leave my job and move our family back to New Braunfels to be closer to family for emotional support and better/more accessible medical care for our daughter. As a result of this decision, I received a substantial check from my former employer for a balance of unused leave time. Despite our diminished financial resources, the Lord was convicting us to give more generously. So, we gave the full amount of that check to our church and that constituted our first full tithe.

Since that time, we've encountered the most difficult financial circumstances we've ever faced due to my career change, continued medical expenses, and funeral/burial expenses for our daughter. Through it all and by the grace of God, we've continued to tithe diligently. True to His promise, God has provided. HE has blessed us numerous times along the way by sending unexpected and unsolicited gifts from others to sustain us; gifts of cash passed to us anonymously over a multi-year period, a significant gift from an investment account someone “had forgotten about”, and gifts of cash for specific purposes such as assistance to purchase a van modified for a wheelchair and for our daughter's funeral/burial.

For whatever reason, the Holy Spirit prompted others to give, and their generosity reflects the type of cheerful giver reflected in 2 Corinthians 9:6-8. What we have learned is that God's word is true and that obedience to His word will result in immeasurable blessing. He is a sovereign, just, and loving God. He created it all, He owns it all, and He calls us to be prudent stewards of all He has given us...to use in His ways and for His glory. He can do more with 10% than we can do with 100%. I challenge you to adjust your budget, make the decision to tithe for 90 days and see what the Lord has in store for you.

Your brother in Christ,  
Brad Campbell

**Preschool Ministry**

Three of our Preschool classes visited the First United Methodist Church Pumpkin Patch in October. Our classes have also been painting pumpkins and learning how pumpkins can be in various sizes, shapes and textures. Being a Christian is like being a pumpkin. God picks you from the patch, brings you in and washes off all the dirt. Then He cuts the top and scoops all the yucky stuff out. He removes the seeds of doubt, hate and greed. Last, He carves you a new smiling face and puts His light inside of you to shine for all the world to see!



**MayaWorks Sale**

On December 2nd, lovely handmade products will be for sale in the Church Lobby, including textiles, holiday gifts, jewelry and home accents. MayaWorks is a non-profit Fair Trade organization and works to develop sustainable markets for unique handicrafts created by 7 Maya producer groups in Guatemala. MayaWorks pays artisans fair wages, funds training, and scholarship programs. Giving women an opportunity to earn an income from their skills ends a cycle of poverty and gives them self-confidence and hope for themselves, their children, their family, and their village. For more information about MayaWorks go to <http://www.mayaworks.org>.

**November Flowers**



Nov. 4 - Open  
 Nov. 11 - Nolan & Erna Dietert  
 Nov. 18 - Open  
 Nov. 25 - Open

**St Paul Youth News**

**Wednesday, November 7**

6:00-8:00 p.m.

Open gym & fellowship for 6th-12th grade youth

**Wednesday, November 14**

6:00-8:00 p.m.

Open gym & fellowship for 6th-12th grade youth



**Wednesday, November 21**

10:00am-12:00 p.m.

**Service Project**

**Community Thanksgiving Dinner**

NO open gym due to Worship service and Pie Social

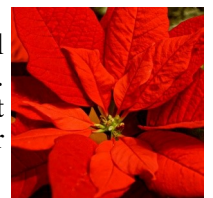
**Wednesday, November 28**

6:00-8:00 p.m.

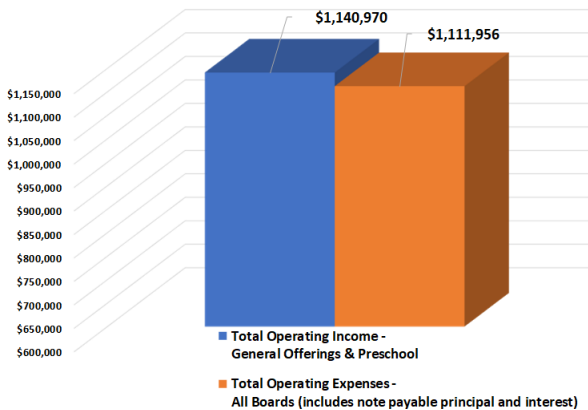
Open gym & fellowship for 6th-12th grade youth

***Christmas Poinsettias on SALE!***

St. Paul Youth are selling beautiful poinsettias from Klepac Greenhouses. Contact any youth members to get yours! They will be delivered December 11th!



Income Versus Expenses  
 as of September 30, 2018



**Mission Moment**

*Texas District*

by Pastor Bryce Formwalt  
 Director of Mission Growth

To read Pastor Bryce's latest article in its entirety, please go to: <http://www.lcmctexas.org/mission-moment>

***Board & Committee Reports*** can be found on the website at <http://www.nbstpaul.org/resources/board-reports/>

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 PRESCHOOL (830) 625-2044  
 FAX (830) 620-7715

**November 2018**



Please join us on Sunday mornings for worship and the Bible study hour:  
 Traditional Worship 8:00 a.m.; Bible study hour 9:15-10:15 a.m.; Informal Worship 10:30 a.m.



Non Profit Organ.  
 U.S. Postage Pd.  
 Permit #90  
 New Braunfels, TX 78130

MEMBER LCMC  
 Return Services Requested

