

## Excelerate!

Covid-19 accelerated shifts that were already happening in God's church.

- online worship and less frequent worship
- virtual learning
- isolation with the emotional strain it brings to individuals and families

During most of 2020, the church was tapping on the brakes, reacting to the changes like a driver uncertain what was around the next bend in the road.

As we look ahead into 2021 and beyond, it is our prayer that we can *Excelerate* into the changes that are necessary in the post-pandemic world to fulfill our mission: *By every possible means we bring every person within our area of influence closer to Christ.*

**Inside this Messenger**, we will apply our core values to some of the ministry challenges and facilities needs that we foresee.

We will also be introducing *Excelerate*, a new offering opportunity. A donor has already funded nearly 50% of this effort!

**The Open Forums** listed below will give you a chance to learn more, ask questions, and share your own insights so that we can *Excelerate* into these new ministry challenges and opportunities.



### Open Forums

To discuss issues facing St. Paul's as we prepare for ministry beyond COVID-19

#### In Person

Sun Feb. 28 at 9:00 am & 10:30 am in the Grace Room

Sat. Mar 6 at 6 pm in Grace Room

#### Zoom Forum

Thurs. Mar 4 at 7 pm

<https://zoom.us/j/95638732576?pwd=SEV5SGhTUUVVhMld4eU14UGc4OE5HQQT09>

## We Value Mission Outreach

Much of what we do in the area of mission outreach serves both to reach new people and to keep members of the St. Paul's family connected to God's Word.

Our online viewership is an example of that. Each week we have over 500 views of our services. We have people joining us in worship regularly from all around Wisconsin, from Alaska to Florida, from Boston to Phoenix. Some are people we have just "met," others are long-term members of the St. Paul's family.

COVID did not begin this change to a larger online presence, but it greatly accelerated it. The challenge will be to stay connected with those locally and at a distance whose primary worship language is online worship. The Ministerial Team is discussing ways to transition our online ministry from simply "provide content" to "engage our viewers," helping people grow in their faith and connect with one another.

### *Plans to Excelerate*

We are learning from other congregations and discussing what an "online campus pastor" position might look like for us. While this person might not be pastorally trained, it would be

someone who is called to shepherd those with whom we connect primarily online.

We have also asked Pastor Strobel to develop the membership Bible study *Following the Promise* into a format that would be available online for anyone to watch and grow in the faith.

### **Other Outreach Efforts**

Our St. Paul's Child Care Center was begun as part of our congregation's outreach ministry. COVID led us to rapidly reconfigure our staffing and enrollment last year. Currently the center is nearly full and requiring far less operating subsidy than pre-COVID. We are thankful for the dedicated efforts of our staff and continue to monitor this ministry for long-term sustainability.



The Bridge at Johnson Creek represents a group of WELS pastors, teachers and lay people who would like to begin a service similar to our Bridge in the Johnson Creek area as another tool to reach the unchurched. COVID has placed those plans on hold, but we maintain contact with the group to offer any assistance possible.

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## We Value Worship Diversity

Our variety of worship languages changed because of COVID. We currently offer four distinctly different worship settings: Traditional, Traditional Online, The Bridge, The Bridge Online. We were not able to sustain our Contemporary Service setting because of COVID.

### *Plans to Excelerate*

Attend an open forum to discuss possible changes as we transition to a post-COVID worship life. Ideas shared among staff include fewer in-person services because of the continued use of online worship, a blended service, and a service that is more "children-friendly" to welcome our parents with young children back into worship.

## We Value Authentic Care

By “authentic care,” we commit ourselves to showing love to our community and to our family here at St. Paul’s. That authentic care was evident in the thousands of dollars given to feed the hungry in our community and to help our mission partners with their food pantry efforts. This value was lived out as congregation members provided hundreds of Christmas gifts to children and elderly in our area.

This value is also lived out in our continuing effort to connect with the many members that we are not seeing as regularly because of COVID. Not only are we providing small group and private communion, Pastor Kuehl is organizing an effort in the weeks leading up to Easter to make a personal contact with members who have not attended in-person worship recently. If you have a need, please let us know. We are here to serve you.



### **Authentic Care through Counseling**

Several years ago, we began planning for a Christian counseling center on our campus. We gave Pastor Bonack time and tuition assistance to pursue a Masters in Mental Health Counseling. He will take his mental health counselor’s licensure exams in April and May and complete his fieldwork hours with the Strong Program, part of Christian Family Solutions, in early June. By mid-June he should have his In-Training License and be able to begin professional counseling services under the supervision of a fully licensed counselor from Christian Family Solutions.

Pastor Bonack has assembled a team of St. Paul’s members who are helping develop what will become the Community Counseling and Care Center at St. Paul’s. They have been focusing on providing health and wellness training including the following:

- Cornerstone Resiliency Training
- Domestic Violence Advocacy/Support
- Marriage Mentoring
- Anxiety/Depression/Suicide Educational Seminar
- Strength Finders Workshops
- Rainbows support group for children who have experienced loss

This counseling and care center leadership group is also evaluating current support groups and exploring the possibilities of additional support groups as trained leaders become available.

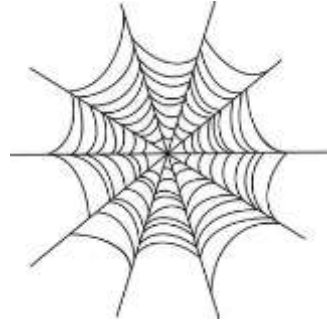
### *Plans to Excelerate*

Christian Family Solutions (a part of Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service) is very interested in helping us staff a satellite site here with a second trained counselor in addition to Pastor Bonack. We are working with WLCFS to develop a contract for this joint ministry. Our “dream goal” is to begin professional services in July with at least two licensed counselors regularly on campus. Counseling services will include both individual/family counseling and group counseling.

We are also developing plans to remodel a room or rooms into the Community Counseling and Care Center using the Gift Trust Fund grant that was approved by the congregation last summer. This facility will serve not only the professional counseling center, but also our support group ministry.

## We Value the Power of Community

God has created us to be in a community where all the “one anothers” of the Bible can take place. COVID has accelerated the isolation that many of us feel. It is our goal that St. Paul’s become a spiderweb church in which each individual is so interconnected with other people that none of us falls away. Those interconnections can form in a life group studying the Bible together, or a circle of friends who gather for fun or sports, or a team that works together to accomplish ministry tasks.



To strengthen both our small group ministry and our efforts to provide more opportunities for personal member ministry, we added Kristin Miller as a part-time Connections Coordinator. This is in addition to her call as the Spanish teacher in our school and Trinity Lutheran in Waukesha.

### Plans to *Excelerate*

Building community is an area of challenge for us as we look to the future.

- What does “community” look like for those who are connected with us online?
- How do we interconnect our youth who attend public schools?
- How do we rekindle our teen ministry and the Awake and Alive ministry to young adults post-COVID?
- What is the best way to begin new groups as it becomes safe to meet in person?
- How do we involve more people in ministry so that more members of our St. Paul’s family have the joy of serving together?

Your Ministerial Team continues to discuss what we can do to build community within the St. Paul’s family in the post-COVID world.

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## We Value the Importance of Family



Several years ago we began using the term “Family Church,” calling fathers and

mothers, husbands and wives to pastor their families. COVID has provided families with an opportunity to worship together in their own homes, giving parents a chance to model their faith. Not only do we provide families with the means to worship online, Dr. Nelson also produces a weekly Kids Club Family Lesson to help parents pastor their children.

### Plans to *Excelerate*

We are marketing our school with the phrase “Building Christian Families.” We want our school

to help strengthen the entire family in their relationship with Christ. The fact that over 98% of our children are already re-enrolled for next year indicates parents see our school as an important partner in their roles as family pastors.

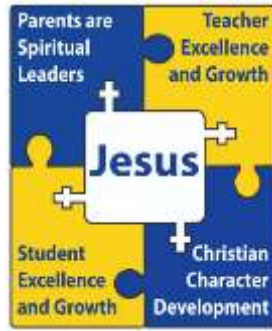
The Marriage Mentoring program will strengthen our families. The counseling center on our site will provide support families may need.

In discussions about his call from a congregation very similar to our own, Principal Fitzsimmons learned about their position of “Family Pastor.” As we look ahead to the retirement of three of our Ministerial Team in the next few years, we are discussing if a role like that might help us excel in teaching the importance of family.

# We Value Generous, Meaningful Living

The Lord has filled God's people at St. Paul's with a generous heart!

- A Cool Million offering reached its \$1 million goal and all the projects have been completed.
- Our Mission and Ministry Fund is 2% above last year. We had prepared for a possible recession with a very conservative ministry plan. As a result, our net cash flow is well above our projections.
- Our Mortgage Fund giving is twice what it was last year. Because our internal debt was erased in the last fiscal year, all our Debt Retirement giving will reduce our mortgage which currently is \$1.3 million.
- Our parents' financial commitment to Christian education serves as a role model for other schools.  
We encourage our parents to recognize their tuition payments as part of their generous support of gospel ministry.
- The Gift Trust Fund balance (\$559,000) and the Legacy Fund balance (\$846,000) are the result of the generous estate planning of



Christians in the past. There will be over \$200,000 in grant funds available for distribution in the coming year.

We also are amazed at the generous gift of time. Even though COVID has limited some of our volunteer opportunities, each week more than 100 volunteers give of their time to support our school, teach and coach our children, prepare for worship, and serve our community.

## Plans to *Excelerate*

The Thirteen 22 Committee exists to help members develop their estate plans in accordance with



Proverbs 13:22, "A good person leaves an inheritance for their children's children." We have again contracted with SFC Estate Coaching to help 30 individuals or families develop estate plans. You can register for an estate coaching time free of charge at [StPaulMuskego.org/Estate-Planning](http://StPaulMuskego.org/Estate-Planning).

In the next few months, we will begin a number of major projects on our campus. Some of them will be paid for through our Maintenance Fund, others through Legacy and Gift Trust Fund grants. Three of the projects are part of our *Excelerate Wish List*. See the next page for details.

## We Value Ministry Excellence

The generous support of ministry allows us to strive for ministry excellence to God's glory.

In our school, three additions we made this year in our pursuit of excellence are:

- the addition of the role of Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Technology
- expanding the position of Extended Learning Coordinator from half-time to three-quarters-time
- additional teachers' aides to support our teaching staff

In our church ministry, we have just added the position of Social Media and Communications Coordinator to help us strive for excellence in communications both internally and externally.



We also encourage our entire team and all our St. Paul's family to grow in their influence by attending the Global Leadership Summit. We will be hosting this simulcast on our campus on Thursday and Friday, August 5 and 6. You can register at [StPaulMuskego.org/Grow/Global-Leadership-Summit-2021](https://StPaulMuskego.org/Grow/Global-Leadership-Summit-2021). The Priority Code is 21SVTEAM.

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## Preparing Our Campus for Excellence

Here are the major projects that you will see happen on our campus over the coming months with the approximate timeline, costs, and funding source.

- Spring 2021 – Replace church HVAC – \$200,000 from the Maintenance Fund
- Summer 2021 – Move classroom wall between school library and Spanish classroom – \$10,000 from the *Excelerate* Wish List
- Summer 2021 – Remodel room/rooms for the Community Counseling and Care Center at St. Paul's – \$50,000 from the Gift Trust Fund grant
- Fall 2021 – Sanctuary Lighting Project – \$100,000 from the *Excelerate* Wish List
- Summer 2022 – Maintenance Garage – \$90,000 from the *Excelerate* Wish List



There are three improvement items that are on our *Excelerate* Wish List:

- Replace the lighting fixtures in the main part of the sanctuary. The system to control the lighting failed several years ago. A new system will not be compatible with the current fixtures.
- Move a wall between the school's library and Spanish classroom to provide a larger classroom.
- Build a maintenance garage. This building will also provide workspace for our school children to learn basic woodworking and possibly small engine repair.

The cost of these three projects is about \$200,000. We will model the tithe by also committing \$20,000 to the Equipping Christians for Ministry Fund to help Martin Luther College build its first new dormitory in 50 years.

**The total *Excelerate* Wish List is \$220,000.** We have already received \$100,000 of that amount! If you would like to help make these three projects a reality, mark your gift *Excelerate*.



# Statement of Activities - Mission & Ministry Fund

For the 7 Months Ending January 31, 2021

Modified Cash Basis

Receipts	Actual	%	7 Months Last Fiscal	+/-	7 Months Plan	+/-	%	2020-2021 Plan
Offerings and Support	1,157,910	51.4%	1,135,270	22,640	1,119,261	38,649	50.5%	1,876,000
Tuition & Fees	989,041	43.9%	987,668	1,373	1,018,100	(29,059)	45.9%	1,749,600
Miscellaneous Receipts	104,855	4.7%	73,767	31,088	80,500	24,355	3.6%	138,000
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>\$ 2,251,806</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>\$ 2,196,705</b>	<b>\$ 55,101</b>	<b>\$ 2,217,861</b>	<b>\$ 33,945</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>\$ 3,763,600</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>								
Compensation & Benefits	1,514,567	67.3%	1,529,576	(15,009)	1,586,594	(72,027)	71.5%	2,742,300
Church Ministries	22,275	1.0%	20,593	1,682	29,167	(6,892)	1.3%	50,000
School Ministries	82,362	3.7%	92,423	(10,061)	133,898	(51,536)	6.0%	161,800
Support Services	93,104	4.1%	91,555	1,549	88,947	4,157	4.0%	142,300
Campus & Facilities	167,049	7.4%	169,337	(2,288)	188,754	(21,705)	8.5%	312,700
Wis Ev Luth Synod	138,250	6.1%	138,250	-	138,250	-	6.2%	237,000
Wis Luth High School	65,681	2.9%	65,681	-	65,683	-	3.0%	112,600
<b>Total expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 2,083,288</b>	<b>92.5%</b>	<b>\$ 2,107,415</b>	<b>\$ (24,127)</b>	<b>\$ 2,231,293</b>	<b>\$ (148,005)</b>	<b>100.6%</b>	<b>\$ 3,758,700</b>
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 168,518</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	<b>\$ 89,290</b>	<b>\$ 79,228</b>	<b>\$ (13,432)</b>	<b>\$ 181,950</b>	<b>-0.6%</b>	<b>\$ 4,900</b>
Capital Expenditures								
<b>Net Cash Flow</b>	<b>\$ 168,518</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	<b>\$ 89,290</b>	<b>\$ 79,228</b>	<b>\$ (13,432)</b>	<b>\$ 181,950</b>	<b>-0.6%</b>	<b>\$ 4,900</b>

**St. Paul's Lutheran Church**  
**S66 W14325 Janesville Road**  
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**[www.StPaulMuskego.org](http://www.StPaulMuskego.org)**

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## **Regaining a Pattern of In-Person Worship**

As we look to the future, we anticipate a large segment of our worshipping congregation will join us online each week. However, we also want to do all that we can to help people feel comfortable in regaining a pattern of in-person worship:

- We will continue our **five weekend worship services** even though some services have very low attendance. For anyone desiring more social distancing, we recommend the Sunday 7:45 and 10:45 am services because of the lower attendance.
- We will offer **two Wednesday Lenten services: 3:30 and 7 pm. The 3:30 service will include a Children's Message** by Pastor Pete in addition to the message from a guest preacher.
- **We will add Easter Services.** All services in the Sanctuary will be identical: Saturday @ 5 pm; Sunday @ 6:30, 7:45, 9:15 and 10:45 am. At The Bridge, the Easter schedule will be 9:00 and 10:30 am.
- We will provide **more outdoor worship services:** June 6, July 4, August 1, and September 12.

The concerns about COVID will make regular, in-person worship for many people unlikely until the pandemic is past. At the same time, we will do all we can to welcome all who are ready to return.