

# A Worn Cover Speaks

by Rev. Lance Armstrong O'Donnell, Senior Pastor  
St. Paul's Lutheran Church  
Oconomowoc, Wisconsin

The 2nd Sunday after Pentecost  
18 June, A.D. 2017  
Ex 19:2-8; Rom 5:6-15; Mt 9:35-10:8 (9-20)

## Introduction

"Never judge a book by its cover"?

CCT: The LORD our God saves us in love and cares for us by the Ministry of the \_\_\_\_\_.

And that Gospel, and its ministers, are veiled in \_\_\_\_\_...

## I. Guys from the Sticks

### A. The Apostles Dismissed

Listen to this list:

#### Matthew 10:2-4 (ESV)

<sup>2</sup>The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; <sup>3</sup>Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; <sup>4</sup>Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

#### John 1:46 (ESV)

<sup>46</sup> Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."

#### Luke 22:59 (ESV)

<sup>59</sup> And after an interval of about an hour still another insisted, saying, "Certainly this man also was with him, for he too is a Galilean."

Where are most of these men from? Where is Jesus from?

What do people assume because of this?

## **B. Jesus Dismissed**

### **Isaiah 53:2–3 (ESV)**

<sup>2</sup> For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground; he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him. <sup>3</sup> He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Why was Jesus dismissed?

## **C. Us**

Why are you dismissed?

### **1 Corinthians 1:25–31 (ESV)**

<sup>25</sup> For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. <sup>26</sup> For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. <sup>27</sup> But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; <sup>28</sup> God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, <sup>29</sup> so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. <sup>30</sup> And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, <sup>31</sup> so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

### **Romans 5:8 (ESV)**

<sup>8</sup> but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

What has God done for you? How?

## **II. Learning to Embrace the Worn**

For us, then, who have been saved and cared for by the Ministry of the Gospel, it is important that we look at our lives:

Are you making judgments on mere appearances?  
Do you exalt the wealthy and "good looking" and miss the glory clothed in humility?



*Christ caring for people through people*

**STEPHEN  
MINISTRY**

## **COMMISSIONING OF STEPHEN MINISTERS**

June 17/18, 2017

St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church

210 E. Pleasant Street

Oconomowoc, WI 53066

### **PRESENTATION**

Dear sisters, you have been equipped to serve as Stephen Ministers at St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church and School.

Listen now to the words we find in Scripture.

"Praise be to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God." (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

"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)

## REQUESTS

Sisters, each of you has been comforted by God with the Good News of Jesus' life and death for you. We ask you now to join in serving our Lord and those in our congregation and neighborhood who need to be comforted.

As the Lord Jesus has responded to your needs, we ask you to strive to be responsive to the needs of others.

As the Lord Jesus took the burdens of the world on his shoulders and has been a friend to you in troubled times, we ask you to be a friend to those who are burdened under the stress of daily life.

As the Lord Jesus patiently listens when you turn to Him, we ask you to be a patient listener in a hurried world.

As the Lord Jesus has broken down the barriers that separated you from God, we ask you to heal divisions wherever you find them and strive to make people whole.

As the Spirit of Christ has given you gifts for service, we ask you to use your skills and talents to help those people whom you serve and to pray for them.

As the Lord Jesus has shown His care to you, we ask you to help this congregation grow as a caring community through your own caring ministry.

As the Lord Jesus has revealed His presence to you through faith, we ask you to share your personal experiences of faith with those around you so that they too may celebrate the presence of Christ in our world today.

Please join us for an enriching experience at the  
**2017 St. Paul's Marriage Retreat.**

November 10 - 12, 2017

***Celebrating the Journey with Christ:  
On the Same Page***

**Cost per couple:**

\$350 (**Early Bird Special**- If booked and paid prior to 8/31/17.  
The first 20 to register are also guaranteed Lake View Rooms)

\$375 (If booked after 9/1/17)                      Final Registration 9/18/17

This low cost includes 2 nights stay and a Dinner Buffet for two on Saturday night!

**Where: Blue Harbor Resort**

725 Blue Harbor Drive, Sheboygan, WI 53081

[www.blueharborresort.com](http://www.blueharborresort.com)   [www.visitsheboygan.com](http://www.visitsheboygan.com)

**Registration Form:** Please find this on [www.splco.org](http://www.splco.org).

**Questions? Email:** [stpaulmarriage@gmail.com](mailto:stpaulmarriage@gmail.com)

**Call or Text:** Linda Hertneky @ 651-206-8497  
Angie Scharnell @ 920-285-1264

*A Cord of Three Strands is not Easily Broken  
Ecclesiastes 4:12*



***To help keep costs down there are Sponsorship opportunities!  
Sponsors will be recognized in the Epistle, Bulletin and at the  
Retreat. Thank you for supporting the Marriage Ministry!***

- Refreshment Breaks (3) - \$200
- AV and Conference Materials - \$250
- Sponsor a couple - \$375
- Friday Night Social Hour - \$500

# St. Paul's Fellowship

## Coffee Hour

hosted by...



## The Marriage Ministry Team

*Celebrating the Journey with Christ:  
On the Same Page*

# June 18!

(Mark your calendars for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Every Month!)

*June Hosts: Marriage Ministry Team*

Time: 9:15 am to 10:25 am

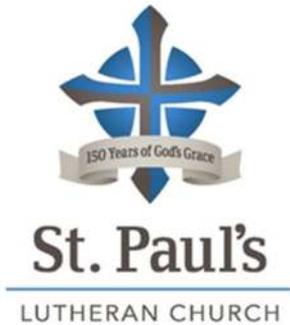
**Stay after the 8am Service!**

**Come a little early for the  
10:30 Service!**

**Where:** St. Paul's school lobby & hallway or  
outside by the lobby doors on sunny days

Welcome new members & visitors!  
Enjoy the fellowship of our church members!

Coffee, milk, juice, water and sweet treats will be served



**Special Voters' Meeting**  
**June 25, 2017**  
**12:00 in the Church**

**AGENDA**

***Mission: Reaching, Serving & Growing Disciples***

- A. Call to Order
- B. Opening Devotion
- C. Approval of Agenda
- D. Motion to Increase Line of Credit *(on reverse side)*
- E. Motion to Approve Financial Ministry Plan
- F. Adjournment
- G. Closing Prayer

According to the Bylaws of St. Paul's congregation, if the congregation is to incur any formal debt, it must be approved by a minimum of (75) voting members at a properly called Voters' Assembly Meeting.

If a quorum is not met, the incurring of debt must be dropped from the agenda and a meeting must be rescheduled at a future date for that item. At the future meeting, then all voting members present shall constitute a quorum.

### **Motion to increase St. Paul's Line of Credit**

*Whereas*, St. Paul's congregation is encountering high fluctuations in receiving income from offerings, school tuition, and other income on a monthly basis, and

*Whereas*, St. Paul's congregation has had to reach into and return money to other designated funds to pay monthly expenses, and

*Whereas*, St. Paul's congregation has large monthly planned expenses which will many times be greater than the receiving income for that month(s),

*Be it resolved*, the Church Leadership Team is asking the congregation to increase our current Line of Credit by \$150,000 to deal with these large fluctuations between income and expenses.

*Be it further resolved*, the Line of Credit will be added to the financial report printed in the worship bulletin to show withdrawals or deposits from the Line of Credit.

*Finally, be it further resolved*, that if after eight months' time this congregation, while periodically drawing on the Line of Credit but is unable to repay back anything toward this Line of Credit, will face the decision of drastically reducing expenses before the next budget year.

## VOWS

Are you prepared to meet those requests that we ask of you?

**Yes, with the help of God.**

Are you prepared to nurture the skills you have learned and use them in service to others – to support, encourage, build up and comfort people in their needs?

**Yes, with the help of God.**

*(Congregation)* Now we ask you, members of St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church and School, to open your hearts to the ministry of these people and to pray for them, that they may be effective servants of Christ. Are you prepared to meet this request? If so, answer, "Yes, with the help of God."

**Yes, with the help of God.**

We also ask you to accept their ministry when you need help, to allow these individuals to work with you as you face struggles in your life, that you might receive support and help from your Christian brothers and sisters. If you are prepared to meet this request, answer, "Yes, with the help of God."

**Yes, with the help of God.**

*(Stephen Minister trainees)* Are you prepared to serve as Stephen Ministers at St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church and School?

**Yes, with the help of God.**

## BLESSINGS

Come forward now and receive a blessing.

Tina Gartzke, may the Spirit dwell in you richly, filling you with joy and peace and courage for all your endeavors in the Lord's service.

Brenda Nagel, blessed is the person whose strength is the Lord Jesus – may you ever find strength in Him for your ministry and your life.

Michelle Oddsen, as God has loved us in Jesus Christ, may God bless you as you share with others the love you have received from God.

## COMMENDATION

Because you have promised faithfully to serve the Lord Jesus and His people as Stephen Ministers, I commend you to the care and guidance of the Holy Spirit as you in turn care for others. Work hard. Use the skills you have learned, releasing the gifts and talents the Spirit of God has given you so that you might be a blessing to the people you meet and care for. Continue to study. Reflect upon the situations you encounter. Pray for the people whose lives you are privileged to share. Be free to share your own personal frustrations and needs with other so that you might receive the same kind of care and love you offer others. Act boldly and without fear, for Christ is with you. And “may the God of peace sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Go now in peace to serve the Lord, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

Do you favor the good looking or wealthy at work?

Do you view wealth and good looks and assume that "everything is, therefore, ok" with them?

Do you see the worn covers of life in its various forms and dismiss them as lacking God's blessing?

Repent!

Repent! And remember your calling! Remember that ". . . God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8, ESV)

Repentance means:

1. Confessing your sin to God
2. Desiring to do better
3. Trusting and living from the forgiveness earned for you by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Repent, you who believe in Jesus Christ and trust His Word. Repent, and come to the Table of the Lord, where Christ Himself feeds us--as He promises--with forgiveness through His Body and Blood.

## **Conclusion**

CCT: The LORD our God saves us in love and cares for us by the Ministry of the Gospel.

May we, who are cared for by this Ministry, in our homes, in our workplaces, and in our community, embody the grace and love that we have received.

May the peace of God, which passes all understanding, guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. [Amen]

## **2017/2018 Financial Ministry Plan Update**

The Church Leadership Team is in its final phases of completing next fiscal year's Financial Ministry Plan. The preliminary budget has been very challenging and currently shows a DEFICIT of approximately \$86,000. We are carefully diligently reviewing all options in order to provide the congregation a balanced budget. Below are some options we are discussing:

1. Borrow money from Line of Credit
2. Reduction in salary or number of employees
3. Transfer 2016/2017 surplus over to next fiscal year
4. Increase number of fundraising events

Please pray for all involved as we review these options. Any questions, please contact the office.

Jon Schmeling, President