

ALUMNI NEWS

St. Luke Lutheran School
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SPRING 2018



ST. LUKE MASCOT

St. Luke now has a new mascot, the St. Luke Lion.

Our gifted art teacher, Mrs. Susan Burtner, painted a magnificent lion with the Bible verse from Proverbs 28:1, “The wicked flee though no one pursues, but the righteous are as bold as a lion.”

It was hung in the back of the activity center and reminds us that we can be bold only because of what Christ has done for us.



BASKETBALL TEAMS

This year we embarked on a renewed effort for our boys’ basketball team. Our enthusiastic coaches had fourth, fifth and sixth grade teams, in addition to our seventh and eighth grade team. The boys worked hard, learned lots, and had a great time. As for their record—well, let’s just say it was a great experience as they build character for the future.

Our sixth, seventh and eighth grade girls’ team played in their second season under the able tutelage of Mrs. Morley and Mr. Kenyon. They also learned lots and had a great time. Their record eclipsed the boys and gave them something to “shoot for” next season.



SAVE THE DATE

October 28, 2018

Mark Wilt’s retirement
celebration—
(time to be determined)

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A NOTE FROM MR. WILT

As I write this article, I am sitting on the bus, returning from the students' Washington, DC trip. While in our nation's capital we had our usual whirlwind tour visiting the U.S. Capitol, the White House, Mount Vernon, Arlington Cemetery, and Ford's Theatre, just to name a few.

We had twenty-six students and twenty-six adults, and I wasn't quite sure if I had enough students to keep all those parents in line or not. But as it turned out, we all had a good time, learned a little, saw a lot, and grew closer together as children of God.



LIST OF STAFF

Mrs. Barbara Leffler
Preschool

Mrs. Angelina Bachman
Pre-K

Mrs. Linda McCall
Pre-K

Mrs. Stacy Fanton
Kindergarten

Mrs. Angela Turner
Grade 1

Mrs. Judy Abernathy
Grade 2

Mrs. Sandra Markle
Grade 3

Miss Brenda Fett
Grade 4

Mrs. Kelly Carney
Grade 4; Grades K-8
Physical Education

Mrs. Jennifer Baker
Grade 4 Wed AM

MRS. MARY JEAN MONTAG

While Mrs. Mary Jean Montag has slowed down just a little, she still does so much for the students of St. Luke.

Thursday evenings from November to March she runs the Kids Club program for grades K-8 students. The evening includes dinner, Bible lessons, craft, gym time, and closing devotions. Many students participate in the program and enjoy coming every week. A Bible study is also available for the parents while their children are at Kids Club.

For six weeks in the fall and again in the spring, Mrs. Montag sets up a mentoring program for our seventh and eighth grades on Monday morning. All the students in those grades get their own mentor for an hour and a half. They talk about Scripture, the catechism, and other topics that help to nurture and strengthen each student's faith.



Thanks for another great year, Mrs. Montag!

NEVER SAY NEVER...

by Sharon Klein Ambrose (Class of '75)

How many times have you said “If you had told me that (fill in the blank), I would have laughed out loud/been horrified/said you were off your nut, etc.”? When I left St. Luke, I didn't fathom that I would ever touch a real computer, let alone have one in my house, carry a phone in my pocket (even if it's a “dumb” one), or marry my classmates' brother, which would lead to being the grandma of a fourth-generation Ambrose family St. Luke alum, but...**



Alfred (Kroneberg) Maurhoff (Class of '33) is an example of beating the odds. His mother died after giving birth, so due to his small size, plus the difficulty of raising a newborn without modern formula and medicines, his chance of survival was not good; he was baptized immediately. Alfred had older siblings, but his widowed dad couldn't take care of an infant, so as was common practice back then, the babe was “gifted” to his maternal uncle and aunt, taking their surname (although he was not officially adopted until he enlisted in the army—regulations, you know). After St. Luke, he graduated from Butler High School, then helped run the family dairy farm until he was drafted into WWII; he became a radio operator, surviving the pivotal Battle of the Bulge. Back home, Alfie eventually married Lola, became a self-employed electrician, got a pilot's license, raised six kids, plus lots of sheep and beef cattle, in addition to being a very active leader at St. Luke, Butler Farm Show, and the entire community for decades. BTW, that baby who was not given much hope of living turned 100 years old on May 18, making him the oldest member of St. Luke and the second oldest alumni (perky Pearl Neubert Parnell of Saxonburg was a grade ahead)! Alfred attributes his long, happy life to being blessed by our Lord, good genes, healthy living, a loving marriage, and eating copious amounts of ice cream. He still lives down the road on the farm where he grew up, and while he has slowed down recently, this proud American vet plans to represent the highly honored 99th Infantry Division (dubbed Battle Babies—Google their heroic story) in the big Memorial Day parade in Washington, D.C.!

Consider **Otto J. Nicol's** arrival in 1927—do you think he ever dreamed that he would be our much-loved (semi-sainted, even) principal 36 years later? He had already started teaching the kids of his first students before his untimely death in 1963; every alum from then agrees that he was strict but could also have fun, and that he was a fine Christian educator. Here's a mind-boggling fact: none of the next four principals stayed with us more than five years, so in the past 91 years, we've only had six different men running this school! When soft-spoken **Mark Wilt** came here to teach 5th & 6th grades, little did he know that he would be thrust into the leadership role one year later, or that the following year, enrollment would drop to a decades-old low of 65 students after a devastating church split. Then again, he had no idea that he would stick around until he helped build us back up to over 200 kids, adding full day kindergarten and a preschool along the way! Some thoughts about Mr. Wilt from 8th graders during his first year as principal: “My first impression was how tall and powerful he appeared; a commanding presence, totally in charge, but after getting to know him better, he showed his caring, gentle side. There was some messing around, but he really wanted us to learn as much as possible in a Christian atmosphere and to become the best that we could be!”--**Tracy Nicol Froh, Class of '81** (yes, O.J. was her grandpap). “My clearest memory was of him always downing a Twinkie or two! I remember thinking, wow, he is tall and very intimidating! He used a bigger vocabulary than any other teacher had in the past (does he think we're in college?) -- he expected a lot!”--**Linda Ambrose Drewencki, Class of '81**. **Beth Klein Byers, Class of '81**, says she can't remember many details, but will never forget their new principal's ire after a well-planned April Fools' prank (the 8th grade girls hid in a cubbyhole in the church for an hour or two with snacks and a radio while a frantic search ensued); she believes it may have been St. Luke's first assigned detention, complete with community service! (Fun fact: Great Aunt Beth, nephew Lee Ambrose, and grand nephew Isaac Ambrose all had Mr. Wilt as principal—that's 3 generations of Klein kids--yoy!)

While the principal call committee's initial 8-month search did not produce a suitable replacement, they'll begin Round 2 this fall; meanwhile, St. Luke P.E. teacher and church member, Mrs. Kelly Carney will fill in, under the guidance of Mr. Wilt. She is sweet, intelligent, professional, and fun-loving; plus, she was raised by a Lutheran school principal, so we'll be fine! (Hint: on that job description, better not list the myriad of tasks that Mr. Wilt performed that usually went unnoticed, and definitely unpaid. For example, is the New Guy (or Gal!) going to shovel & salt the sidewalks all winter, then climb on the roof to chop ice? Is N.G. going to scrub & wax each floor twice a year? Scrape lbs. of mud left in the halls after recess each spring & fall? Change the highest light bulbs & plunge the lowest toilets? Chaperone every extracurricular activity, making sure everything is cleaned up, put up, & locked up? Attend every meeting of the voters, Parish Board, Church Council, school staff, & PTL? Play tour guide to a busload of 7th & 8th graders and their rowdy parents in NYC or D.C. every spring? Is N.G. willing to kiss a pig, ride a tricycle, “sing” an Elvis tune, sell pumpkins while dressed in colonial garb, or take a pie to the face for the cause? Hmm, we'll never get anyone if we include a copy of this in the candidate's packet...)

The moral of this story is that you never know what God has planned for you! **Thank you, Mr. Wilt, for 39 years of humble servanthood—Go with God! (His retirement gala this fall will be held on October 28—please join us for the festivities!—we'll be asking for old photos & memories, so please start digging...)



LIGHTHOUSE FOUNDATION

In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Matthew 5:16

When you think of four things that would be healthy, necessary, and even exciting for students to do, what action words come into your mind? This year at St. Luke our theme revolves around four words—LEARN—GROW—TELL—SHINE. Certainly you want the students to be LEARNing—if not, why go to school? GROW—if students are learning, they should be growing as well, and hopefully if they are learning and growing, they are TELLing—telling others about Jesus. Finally, if they are learning, growing, and telling, they are letting their lights SHINE—shining brightly for Jesus wherever they go. To

nurture the children and assist them in letting their Christian lights shine, our offerings and special projects will be supporting the Lighthouse Foundation of Butler. The Lighthouse Foundation serves those

in need by offering meals, groceries, interim housing, low-cost vehicles, financial counseling, and the list goes on.

To date, our offerings have exceeded \$18,600—\$3,612.30 from Chapel offerings (through May 4), \$2,907.37 from the coin banks, \$36.56 in change from the Book Fair, \$6,756 tithe from the Annual Fund, \$1,825.22 from the Children's Christmas Services, \$297.25 in change from the Christmas Shop, and \$3,250 from Concordia's Angel Tears grant! Thank you for all your prayers and support.

MRS. CINDY SMITH TAKES HER LEAVE

After twenty years of faithful service our seventh grade instructor will be retiring. We are interviewing teachers right now to replace her. That will be no easy task, as she will be greatly missed!

One of our eighth grade students interviewed Mrs. Smith regarding her time here and on her upcoming retirement.

Hello! My name is Alexandra Organ from St. Luke Lutheran School and I interviewed the seventh grade teacher, Mrs. Smith. Mrs. Smith teaches seventh grade math, religion, English, literature, and spelling. She also teaches eighth grade English, literature, and spelling.

Mrs. Smith's favorite memory at St. Luke is all the dinner theaters. She also loves teaching because she loves the kids! Mrs. Smith has been teaching for forty years, twenty at St. Luke. She oversees the Student Council, after school clubs, the dinner theater, and the school dances. Mrs. Smith said that she hopes she has helped at least one person here. Her plans after she retires is to sleep, spend time with family, and travel. Mrs. Smith will miss the kids and the parents the most. All her students agree that one famous Mrs. Smith quote is, "I'll dock ya!"



Mrs. Smith and her 2017-2018 class.

NEW SCHOLARSHIP AT ST. LUKE

Recently a new scholarship has been added to the ones available to students at St. Luke. This is a merit scholarship that will be available to students in grades fifth, sixth and seventh to be awarded for the following year. The scholarship will be given based on the following criteria:

- Student's academic achievement. GPA must be at least 3.0 for every grading period during the current school year
- Attendance record
- Applicant properly filling out all necessary forms and application, including parent signature
- Student essay about the importance of his/her faith and explaining why he/she should be awarded the scholarship
- Teacher recommendation
- Student's volunteer service and other activities in the community

This new fund will be called the Leah Montag Memorial Merit Scholarship Fund. Only the interest and dividends from this fund will be used so that the principal can remain intact ensuring scholarships to students for many years. The school wishes to thank Mr. Allen Montag for starting this scholarship in the memory of his dearly departed wife Leah.



WILLIS F. FOLLSTAEDT MEMORIAL COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP



Last year's scholarship has been awarded to two deserving alumni—Benjamin Andrews, and Sarah Neubert. Both are fine examples of young people, growing in faith on their walk with God.

Benjamin Andrews graduated from St. Luke Lutheran School in 2011 and from Knoch High School in 2015. Benjamin attended Liberty University from 2015-2017 and is presently attending Gannon University pursuing a chemistry degree.

Sarah Neubert also graduated from St. Luke Lutheran School in 2011 and Knoch High School in 2015. She is attending

Messiah College near Harrisburg, PA. Sarah is pursuing a degree in German Education. Her prospective graduation date is May of 2019.

The Willis F. Follstaedt Memorial was begun by Dr. Vernon Neubert, a childhood friend and classmate of Willis. Dr. Neubert wrote of many fond memories of the time he and Willis spent together and the fine example that Willis set. Dr. Neubert also expressed his appreciation for the fine Christian education he and Willis received at St. Luke. These memories and his appreciation led Dr. Neubert to establish the Willis F. Follstaedt Memorial College Scholarship. Willis was the only St. Luke member to give his life for his country during World War II.

Each year a grant is presented to an eligible student (or students). Applicants must be graduates of St. Luke Lutheran School and currently be active members of St. Luke Lutheran Church. The grant consists of the interest generated by the endowment fund for one year.

LIST OF STAFF (CONT)

Mrs. Shayne Garcia-Bish
Grade 5

Mrs. Susanne Gillespie
Grade 6

Mrs. Melissa Busler
Grade 6 Math; IPS; Grades
7 & 8 Pre-Algebra

Mrs. Cynthia Smith
Grade 7

Mr. Mark Wilt
Grade 8; Principal

Mrs. Diane Beckstead
K-8 Music Education; Pi-
ano

Mrs. Melissa Kenton
Instrumental Music
Lessons; Band

Mrs. Susan Burtner
K-8 Art Education

Mrs. Susan Ambrose
Administrative Assistant

Mrs. Sonya Hassler
Office Assistant; School IT
Manager

Linda Doerr Bogan,
Class of 1959, speaks on
how her spiritual
foundation was built at St.
Luke:

"I had previously always gone to Sunday School. Although I learned the Bible stories, the teaching was not as "in depth" as having a religion class every morning where I needed to memorize Bible verses and be tested on what I was learning. I realized they were not just "stories", they were real and they were very important."



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ANNUAL FUND

Again this year, a faithful committee worked to plan this year's Annual Fund Drive. Over 1000 letters were mailed and two evenings were set aside to make follow-up phone calls seeking to reach the ambitious goal of \$50,000.

This year we were excited to have a year long theme:

LEARN-GROW-TELL-SHINE for our annual fund drive. A portion of the donations will assist the mission efforts of The Lighthouse Foundation of Butler. The Lighthouse Foundation provides food and produce, transitional housing, and many more whole life ministries to those in need. What a great experience for the students to help raise money and give their time and talents in local service projects!

New school technology projects will also be funded through this effort, including new hardware and online-based curriculum and programs. At least half of the Annual Fund donations will once again support the Plant-A-Seed Scholarship Fund which provides tuition assistance to families who otherwise could not afford to attend St. Luke School. Additional donations will benefit the Mark A. Neubert Endowment Fund which insures a St. Luke education will be available and accessible for generations to come and to the Little Maestro Music Endowment Fund which will enhance our music program. The remaining will be used for facility and playground enhancements.

I wish to personally thank all the extremely generous donors who so faithfully contributed to our Annual Fund. To date we have raised over \$68,000.

Mark Wilt