God’s love knows no barriers. St. Pascal’s...where all people matter.
Welcome! We hope you enjoy your time with us. Whether you are just visiting, looking for a parish home or already part of our faith community, it’s great to have you with us. Whatever your life circumstances, wherever you have been or whatever has happened in your life, you are welcome here. Please join us after Sunday Mass for hospitality and to find out more.

DECEMBER 17, 2017 | THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Pastor
Fr. Michael Byron
frmike.byron@stpascals.org

Deacon
Rev. Mr. Richard Moore
richard.moore@stpascals.org

Parish Administrator
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Music & Liturgy
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Director of Development
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Sarah Mathis | ext 122
sarah.mathis@stpascals.org

MASS TIMES
Saturday - 4:30 pm
Sunday - 8:45 & 10:30 am (ASL)
Tuesday, Thursday & Friday - 7:30 am
Wednesday - 9:30 am
Dear Friends:

For the past five years our St. Pascal’s community has offered Brioschi Hall as the venue each spring for the annual Twin Cities gala for the benefactors of St. Mary’s Mission on the Red Lake Indian Reservation in northern Minnesota. This venerable old church and school, founded by Benedictine missionaries 159 years ago, has been dedicated to sharing spiritual and educational resources with some of the poorest of the poor in our state. Their pride and joy is the grade school that they work so hard to keep afloat. I have been there, and I know that it is often a Catholic island of hope in a sea of despair and poverty. Each year their pastor, Fr. Jerry Rogers, and a group of tribal elders journey to our campus in order to say thank you to their supporters locally and to raise some money by offering a delicious Red Lake walleye dinner. If you’ve been there then you know that it may be the best meal you have all year. (You may also have noticed the “dream catcher” which hangs in our gathering area—a gift from the Red Lake band to us a couple of years ago in appreciation for our hospitality.) As a parish we do not offer formal financial support to Red Lake, but many of our parishioners have come to know and love the people there and attend the gala dinner annually in order to offer individual support.

As you probably heard in the news, last week their big old church building burned to the ground—a total loss. It was heartbreaking news for a community that struggles so much all the time just to get by. If there is any good news it is that none of the fire touched the school building, which was able to carry on with normal operations the next day. As Fr. Jerry said in the media, it was an opportunity for him to remind his community that the church is the people, not the building. They have lost a beautiful structure that housed precious Catholic tribal memories and precious religious artifacts, but they have not lost their "church."

Immediately after that tragic news I heard from several of our parishioners who wanted to offer some sort of gesture of care and solidarity to the Red Lake community on behalf of St. Pascal’s. I learned that one concrete way we could express our affection would be to purchase a large Nativity scene (crèche) for the parish and school, to replace the one that was destroyed by the fire. I was in email contact with the people up there and they said that they would welcome such a gift with enormous gratitude. It shipped last week and should be there in plenty of time for Christmas in their makeshift worship space. I’ll invite you this weekend, if you care to do so, to contribute to the cost of that gift. I am confident that we will have no trouble in finding enough generous donors for that. What a wonderful gesture of goodness to people who have suffered so much.

And speaking of suffering in Advent, here are a few excerpts from the Christmas letter from the daughter of a gracious woman whom I’ve known for almost 30 years, a widow now. She doesn’t have the gift of holiday memories much any more because of her dementia, but here’s what I read:

"(Mom’s) faith is important to her, and prayers remain ready at her lips. It is amazing to us that as soon as we pull in to the parking lot at church, she immediately knows she is “home.” She absolutely still knows the parts of the mass and is spot on with the responses and prayers. To sit and experience mass with her is a gift and a reminder of who is in control.... Although we wish Mom was really present here for us, we are grateful for the time we have with her, and especially thankful for the days when the window to her memory is open wide and clear." More grace from the heart of sorrow: Beautiful.

Fr. Mike Byron

Christmas Decorating...CAN YOU HELP?

Sunday, December 24

Our Advent season is very short this year and our Environment & Art Committee will need lots of help changing over from Advent to Christmas in the worship space. This is a really fun way to spend a couple of hours volunteering for the parish! Any help for any amount of time is appreciated. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Sharon Balcom in the parish office at 774.1585 or sharon.balcom@stpascals.org.

The 15th Annual Friends & Family Event

We need some stocking stuffers!

St. Pascal’s 15th Annual Friends & Family event is Saturday, April 21, 2018. Though it may seem likely that is a long time from now, the perfect time to get deals on gift cards is NOW—and the Friends & Family event needs to collect many. Please keep it in mind if you see a deal for gift cards! Gift cards can be dropped in the collection basket in an envelope with “Friends & Family” written on it. Questions call or email Mike Aeling at 307.8237 mjaeling@gmail.com.

Young at Heart Mass and Luncheon

Thursday, December 28 at 11:00 AM

Attention Seniors 55 plus. Our next Young at Heart meeting begins with Fr. Mike celebrating the Eucharist with us at 11:00 on the Thursday after Christmas. Then following a short meeting, we will enjoy a meatloaf dinner catered by Magnolia's for which we ask a $10.00 donation payable on the day of the meeting. Our entertainment will be the Minneapolis Southside Singers—back by popular demand—who will put us in the real Christmas spirit. You are most welcome whether you are a regular or a first-timer. And you know we will miss you if you're not there! Please RSVP by Tuesday, December 26 to Betty Hensel at 714.8958 or bjhen@q.com or to Barb Kendle at 738.3799. We need an accurate count for the luncheon. Thank you!

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Baptized in Christ

We welcome into our community of faith

Kai David Kuschel,
child of Seth and Rachel

who was recently Baptized in our church.
May God bless this household of faith.

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In Christ We Live Forever

Please remember in your prayers...

Eugene Hawes
Connie Schunneman

who were recently buried from our church.
We extend our sincere sympathy to their families and friends, and pray for their souls’ eternal peace.
**OUR SCHOOL**

**Cookies in a Jar—On Sale!**

*After all Masses December 16 & 17*

The popular Cookies in a Jar contains all the basic ingredients and a printed recipe for a batch of delicious cookies. A variety of cookie types will be available. Each jar is only $8.00! Cookies in a Jar make a fun and practical gift or use one for yourself to help with your holiday baking.

Proceeds will go to the 7th and 8th grade Washington DC trip. Thank you for supporting our students!

**Many Thanks!**

Thank you to all of the volunteers who helped at the Santa Shop! From helping the students shop to wrapping all of those presents, it was so magical to see the excitement on the students’ faces as they shop for their family members! We couldn’t have done this wonderful event, if it wasn’t for our amazing volunteers!

**Registration for the 2018-19 School Year**

Registration is fast approaching! Are you interested in checking out St. Pascal Baylon Catholic School? We are currently offering tours and meeting with families interested in our program. Schedule a visit today!

**Kindergarten Shadow Opportunity!**

This great opportunity is for Prek families interested in SPBCS Kindergarten. It is a one hour snapshot of a “day in the life of a SPBCS Kindergarten!” This opportunity includes a tour of the school, observation, and finishes with a Q&A with our Admissions Director, Jackie Nordman. Call the school office today or email Jackie Nordman at jackie.nordman@stpascals.org.

**Explaining the Minnesota Faith Agenda and Faith Delegates**

*Thursday, December 21 at 6:30—St. Cecilia’s Catholic Church Fellowship Hall*

Leaders at ISAIAH, a faith based organization, have set a goal of getting 500 Faith Delegates from congregations across the State to attend their precinct caucus as Faith Delegates on Tuesday, February 6, 2018. The Faith Agenda is in its second draft and a group of faith leaders is honing it down at a final meeting on December 19. We will use the agenda to ensure that the next Governor of Minnesota is accountable to our shared values on a broad range of social justice issues such as health care, the environment, economic dignity, education, and housing.

Please join us if you are able for one hour when we will share the Faith Agenda in its final form. All are welcome and treats of the season will be provided!

Questions? Contact Bob Kessler at bobkessler45@gmail.com or 334.2289 (cell).

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**FAITH FORMATION**

**Confirmation I—9th Grade Families**

A reminder that registration forms for Confirmation I are due this week. Families of 9th graders should have received a mailing in November. If you have a 9th grader and did not receive the mailing, contact Kim Roering in the parish office. Youth in 9th grade and older who wish to prepare for the sacrament are welcome to be a part of the process.

**Barnes & Noble Giftwrapping**

*December 22 & 23 from 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM*

Doing some last minute shopping and need help wrapping gifts? Members of the St. Pascal’s/Blessed Sacrament mission trip group will be at the Barnes & Noble store in Maplewood Mall wrapping gifts for tips to use toward the cost of their mission trip to Nashville in July 2018.

**Mexican Dinner and Silent Auction**

*Saturday, January 27, 2018 5:00-7:00PM in Brioschi Hall*

The Mexican Dinner and Silent Auction is a fundraiser for the mission trip to Nashville. Watch the bulletin for details. If you would like to contribute gift cards, merchandise, or services to the silent auction, contact Kim Roering in the parish office.

**Children’s Liturgy of the Word**

*Leader Needed: 8:45AM Sunday Masses*

We are in need of at least one additional leader for Children’s Liturgy of the Word for the 8:45 AM Mass. This will help us to be able to offer CLW it at least 2 times a month at 8:45 AM. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Kim Roering in the parish office.

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**Parish**

**Contact Information**

| Parish Office | 651.774.1585 |
| Fax | 651.774.9152 |
| Email | church@stpascals.org |
| After hours emergency number for death, dying or anointing of the sick | 651.280.9239 |

**Parish Office Hours**

- Mon-Fri: 8:00 - 4:00 PM
- Holidays as announced

**School**

**Contact Information**

| School Office | 651.776.0092 |
| Fax | 651.774.9152 |
| Email | laurie.jenrrich@stpascals.org |

**School Office Hours**

| September-June | Mon - Fri | 8:00 - 4:00 PM |

**Parish Councils**

**Parish Pastoral Council**

| Ann Karner, Chair |
| Meetings - 1ST Tuesday at 6:30 PM |

**Parish Finance Council**

| Cindy Reisdorf, Chair |
| Meetings - 4TH Thursday at 6:30 PM |

**Sacramental Information**

**Reconciliation**

4:00 PM Saturday and by appt.  
Communal Reconciliation twice yearly. Check the bulletin for dates.

**Baptism**

Pre-baptismal classes are required.  
To register for classes or to schedule a celebration, call the parish office.

**Marriage**

Arrangements must be made with the Pastor at least six months in advance of the desired date.

**Parish Prayer Line**

| 8:00 - 10:00 AM | 651.735.0004 |
| Mary Butler-Levine |
| 4:00 - 6:00 PM | 651.774.3248 |
| Pat Kackman |

**Parish Communication**

**Bulletin Notices**

Please email notices to the parish office by 3:00 PM Monday—hard copy notices must be in by 2:00 PM. Email to thea.munoz@stpascals.org.  
Inserts are limited to 3 inserts per weekend and are included at the discretion of the pastor.

**Mass Announcements**

Direct to Sharon Balcom by 3:00 PM on Wednesday.

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**Year-End Financial Gifts**

As this calendar year quickly comes to a close, you may consider a special year-end financial gift to the parish in support of our many ministries and/or to support our mortgage reduction efforts. Last year, we received over 35 special year-end gifts of cash or stock. These gifts are greatly appreciated and certainly encouraged! Remember, all gifts must be received by December 31 to be considered for the 2017 tax year. Stock transfers and sales do take some time so please take that into consideration as you consider a gift to St. Pascal’s. Thank you for your generous consideration.
Isaiah 61:10
I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation.

Adults: What work of justice could you do this week to bring someone joy?

Kids: What could you do for someone this week to make them happy?

REMEMBER SOMEONE IN A SPECIAL WAY
THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON
You may purchase a plant or make a donation (any amount) in honor of a family member, loved one or someone who is ill or homebound. Please complete the form below and return it to the parish office or place it in the collection basket at Mass. Suggested donation is $10.

I would like to purchase a Christmas plant (circle one)
In Honor of / In Memory of:

From:

Thank you for your generosity and care!

Christmas Contributions
Each year, we rely on generous Christmas contributions to support the ministries of our parish. Weekly Sunday offerings are also vital: it is through these ongoing gifts that we are able to fund staffing needs, building operation and maintenance costs, and the many services our parish provides.

This year, Christmas Day falls on a Monday. Please consider offering your regular Sunday gift and an additional Christmas gift to the parish.

If you receive a contribution envelope packet, you will find envelopes for both a Sunday (4th Sunday of Advent) offering and an offering for Monday, December 25. You may give at Mass, or you may wish to contribute electronically. We understand that you may be traveling to visit loved ones this Christmas, and we want to make it easy to remember our parish during this joyful time. Thank you for your generous contributions at Christmas and throughout the year!
Herald of Light

O God of Justice,
you called the prophet John the Baptist,
to prepare the way for the coming of your Son.
John’s message of repentance led others to embrace you.
Grant your servants ears to hear his cry in the desert of their hearts
so that, transformed by love,
we, too, may turn and embrace you.

Fill us, O God, with the Spirit of courage
and strengthen our will to be heralds of the Light.
Make us fervent in our prayer
and direct us to bring glad tidings to the poor
so that, on that final day,
we may be found holy and blameless
in your sight
as we rejoice in the gift of your mercy.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, December 17, 2017
Glad Tidings

Today’s response, taken from the Magnificat, is Mary’s great song of praise and puts her words of praise on our lips. Imagine the joy she must have experienced. When has Christ filled you with joy? When we ponder the Incarnation,
how can we not be filled with joy? Jesus is the Anointed One who brings Good News to the poor and frees the enslaved. Everything that God has promised to his people is revealed in Jesus and continues today to be revealed in his Church.

Even though this Sunday is joy filled, we cannot forget that many have lost hope and that they find themselves on the margins. Jesus calls us to carry the cross and be heralds of the Good News to the poor and brokenhearted. It is not always easy, but this is the work of all the baptized. This week, gather a group from your family or parish and using these readings for prayer, begin discerning how your community can bring glad tidings to the poor and release to prisoners.
THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, December 18
O Lord
In this third week of Advent, the readings begin to focus more directly on the birth of Christ. In today’s Gospel, Joseph learns how Mary conceived Jesus. Although Scripture does not provide a lot of insight on Jesus’ foster father, the glimpse we get here shows an obedient, loving, and generous man. This passage helps us know that God, through the Incarnation, is truly with us. The praying of the “O” Antiphons begins this week. Consider using them with your meal prayer this week. Today’s Readings: Jeremiah 23:5–8; Psalm 72:1–2, 12–13, 18–19; Matthew 1:18–25.

Tuesday, December 19
O Root of Jesse
The two readings today present God’s awesome power to overcome any trial. First, we hear the story of the wife of Manoah who learns from an angel that she will bear a son. Second, the angel Gabriel tells Zechariah that his wife, Elizabeth, will conceive a son. Imagine how these two women, once barren, rejoiced at the news of conception. Upon their lips were songs of praise. Light candles and pray today for all the unborn and for those who are unable to conceive. Today’s Readings: Judges 13:2–7, 24–25a; Psalm 71:3–4a, 5–6ab, 16–17; Luke 1:5–25.

Wednesday, December 20
O Key of David
The Gospel Acclamation tells of the Key of David setting prisoners free. As we draw closer to Christmas, it is good to reflect on Christ, the Key who unlocks the gates of heaven. It is Christ, the descendant of David, who ransoms us from sin and darkness so we can walk in the light of his countenance. Take your keys today and use them in your prayer as you do lectio divina with today’s psalm. Today’s Readings: Isaiah 7:10–14; Psalm 24:1–2, 3–4ab, 5–6; Luke 1:26–38.

Thursday, December 21
O Dayspring
This is the second time during Advent that we have heard this portion of the Gospel reading from Luke. Because John leapt in Elizabeth’s womb, she seems to know that Mary is carrying the Christ. Her prayer, which we say in the Hail Mary explains it all. Mary’s womb is blessed. Imagine if you were Elizabeth. How might you react to this news? Song of Songs provides images to ponder when we think of the bridegroom coming to be with us. How can we not leap for joy and sing a new song! Today’s Readings: Song of Songs 2:8–14 or Zephaniah 3:14–18a; Psalm 33:2–3, 11–12, 20–21; Luke 1:39–45.

Friday, December 22
O King of Nations
Today we encounter Hannah, the mother of Samuel, and Mary. These two women sing the praises of God at the birth of their children. Listen carefully to the psalm response today and notice its connection to the Magnificat in the Gospel proclamation. Both texts praise God’s power to cast the rich aside and raise up the poor. Jesus, the King of the Nations, has conquered the enemy — so let us rejoice. Today read a commentary on the Gospel and meditate on its rich imagery. Today’s Readings: 1 Samuel 1:24–28; 1 Samuel 2:1, 4–5, 6–7, 8abcd; Luke 1:46–56.

Saturday, December 23
O Emmanuel
In the First Reading, the prophet Malachi announces a messenger who will prepare the way for God’s coming. The Gospel tells of the birth of John the Baptist, the one whose call to repent and prepare a way for the Lord began our Advent season. Have you listened to John’s plea? Review your Advent journey tonight, and be attentive to the rough ways in your life that still need straightening. Praise God for the good works already accomplished. Today’s Readings: Malachi 3:1–4, 23–24; Psalm 25:4–5ab, 8–9, 10 and 14; Luke 1:57–66.
Saint Pascals Social Justice and Caring Committee invites you to partner with Brittany's Place for Christmas. The following items are needed. Any size from small to double X. Brittany's place is located on the east side within our parish boundaries. We know this is late notice but welcome anything you can do. Please bring items to the donation closet next weekend. December 23rd and 24th. Blessings to all of you during this holy season.

Brittany's Place provides a safe and supportive environment that empowers girls and young women to achieve their goals and lead healthy lives.

While in-shelter, residents receive services specifically designed to meet their needs, address the harm caused by the trafficking, and move them toward recovery and self-efficacy. With our partners, we provide stabilizing services for the duration of their stay (health care, mental and chemical health services, education engagement/support, advocacy, and family reunification when appropriate). We make referrals and discharges/placements specific to residents' needs, in order to continue the care begun in-shelter.

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