

## KEEPING THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY IN OUR PRAYERS

On Thursday morning, October 20, there was an incident at Port Washington High School leading to a lock-down of school buildings and the evacuation of students. We know now that there was a false report of an intruder in the building, part of a wider series of false reports to school districts in the area. Fortunately, there was not an intruder and there were no serious physical injuries during the clearing of the building. But in the minutes and hours following the lock-down and evacuation it was experienced as real and there were certainly many frightened students, staff, and parents. In the rapid departure of students and staff from the high school our church became a safe place for students and staff to find shelter quickly. Amy Gilhooly and Beckie Perez were able to shepherd the frightened students into different areas around the church, so they could take a breath and find some calm, allowing calls to be made and school staff could begin to organize. Our congregation can be proud of the way church staff quickly reacted to the rush of people, providing warmth and care in a crisis situation.

In the coming days, weeks, and months, let's all keep our school community in our prayers. It is horrifying that school shootings are something for which the current generation of students, staff, and parents have to prepare. We can be grateful for the quick response of the Port Washington Police Department and the Ozaukee County Sheriff's Office. Thankful for church members and PWHS staff Ralph Perez, Diana Pasten, and Kerry O'Brien and other staff and the administrators of the school district who helped to provide or lead students to safe spaces, calm student fears, and then reconnect students and parents. Thankful to counselors and advisors who will continue to unpack the trauma of those moments with students and staff to help them move forward. Thankful for the supportive way the community has responded. Please keep all of those who were present on October 20 in your prayers that they might all experience the peace and presence of God in difficult circumstances. And then let's all pray for guidance and leadership to find a way to make these kinds of "incidents" a thing of the past; no one should have to worry about these kinds of events.



## COMMUNITY ECUMENICAL THANKSGIVING WORSHIP SERVICE

You are invited to attend this year's Community Ecumenical Thanksgiving Worship on Tuesday evening, November 22. The service will take place at 7:00 at Christ the King Lutheran Church, 420 W. Whitefish Road, here in Port. The theme for this community service is, "Kinship: Where Everyone Matters". Pastor Scott along with several other clergy from the area churches will be sharing brief reflections on the theme. Those who attend are invited to bring food donations for the Port and Saukville food pantries. Following the service there will be fellowship time, featuring homemade pie. The service will also feature a community choir made up of members of different church or community choirs and you are invited to join them. If you are interested in singing, please talk to Brett Dimmer and he can get you the music (a choral version of "All Things Bright and Beautiful"). If you would like to bake a pie to share, that would certainly be appreciated!