

**St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Presents...**

December
2021

Newsletter
The Voice
St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church

**A Message
from our Pastor**

"A voice cries in the wilderness. Prepare the way of the Lord!"

I very much love these words of our Advent scriptures. Every year as we journey through Advent, looking through our windshields ahead to the birth of a tiny baby, the words of John the Baptist always call us to step into the story. These words claim us as a part of the story; the story of the now and the not yet and the story of our faith. Luke speaks these words from the Prophet Isaiah and John speaks them from God.

The inauguration of the public ministry of Jesus came by way of God speaking through someone who had traveled upon packed dirt roads, if he had traveled on any roads at all; and in a remote place. Someone with power the world has difficulty seeing or even understanding. The kind of power that raises the ones trampled underfoot – while lowering others who tarry high above.

God uses the words of someone who is not one of those public figures who are known well, and well-loved because of it. John the Baptist is not a political or a religious leader. At least not officially. Yet, the Word of God comes to him. To HIM – a person without the "right" clothes, or a showplace to live in, or a job where people hold him up – setting him high in the public eye.

A good rule of thumb for reading scripture is to look for the promises. Advent is the *picture* of God's promise of Salvation and the never-ending love of Grace.

The promise of Advent is a *place* where roads do not separate us, where words are not barriers, and all flesh are welcome.

Our Christian hope is held fast in the actions of God, enabling us to stop and look at the ways we have made mistakes, and to then see God in new ways. We have joy in knowing that the baby in Bethlehem is our Savior; Christ the Lord, even as we wait with a longing for Christ to come again. The love of God through Christ covers the brokenness of pain in a suffering humanity; and we are part of the gift-giving. We can serve in and with the power of LOVE that prepares the way of welcome for all.

Beloveds, we are entering into a new year with new ideas and a renewed story to share with those around us. God is faithful and we are walking the journey of change that Covid has wrought, together with grace. We can be joyful in that knowledge and, just like the expectation of what a new life will be, we too can walk in an expectation of the new life Christ brings to our community, our families, and our lives.

I pray over this treasured community of faith. Peace and blessings to each of you dear ones.

~Pastor


Virtual Worship
with St. Paul's

Worshipping Together at Home continues to be a success!

During this unique time in our country's history, St. Paul's has expanded the worship experience. St. Paul's online worship experience helps us connect with our congregation and community! Join us every Sunday at 10:30am for worship on Facebook Live! Each service is uploaded onto our YouTube Channel the following Monday morning. We've added "At Home" resources for those who do not have access to the internet. If you hear of someone who needs these resources, please call the office.

A special thank you to Matthew Brenner for his musicianship that so beautifully enhances our worship. All of our music videos are on our Facebook page and YouTube Channel for your listening pleasure and devotional practice.



A Note About Our Sunday Morning Worship



Kathleen Kerin, Pastor

Come and See! Come and See!

Well. That is more than one word, I know. But it's message is one of invitation – and YOU are invited to join us on Sunday Mornings in the Sanctuary!

The Sanctuary is bright with the joy of Christ and Care for one another. Worship begins at 10:30; plan to arrive a few minutes before we begin. We are singing (softly for now) and reading all of the Lessons. Children are invited to come up to the Altar for a Children's Message and Readers are invited back to the Lectern!

If you feel more comfortable and safe remaining home for worship, please know we will continue to offer livestream worship and uploading it to YouTube on Monday mornings.



Faith Formation

Pastor Kathleen is inviting families who would like to be a part of **Faith formation for First Communion or Confirmation** into a conversation. She can be reached in the church office.

St. Paul's Council Meeting

The next Council meeting will be Sunday, December 12th immediately after worship. The meeting will take place in the council room. Please have your reports in to Courtney no later than Thursday afternoon December 9th at 11am. Courtney will send them out by Thursday afternoon to give members time to read them. The Executive team will meet the Wednesday before Sunday's Council Meeting. Thanks for all you do to lead our congregation.



Zoom Coffee Hour with Pastor

Pastor's Zoom Coffee Hour will be paused until further notice. Pastor will reevaluate the need as we continue to move forward.



Thank You For Your Support!

Thank you for your continuing financial support during this time! Our regular monthly expenses continue, including staff and building expenses, as well as the expenses that enable us to continue communication, outreach, and worship. Your generosity is a profound and powerful witness to this congregation's ministry. Contributions help us serve our community and you, our congregation and family!

Announcements

POINSETTIAS ARE AVAILABLE!

Poinsettias are available for \$10 each!

Place your orders by

December 17th.

Contact Vinolia

Bethala at 215-635-7009 with any questions.

Make checks payable to:

Vinolia Bethala

7405 Richards Road

Elkins Park, PA 19027



ADVENT CONTINUES!

Everyone is invited to a midweek conversation and study on every **Wednesday until the 22nd**. Zoom will also be available. We will be gathering in the Chapel from 7:30pm to 8:30pm and on Wednesday afternoons beginning around noon-ish.

Continue to check out the St. Paul's Facebook site each afternoon for an **Advent Video Message** from Pastor Kathleen. Let's journey through Advent and into Christmas together!

Announcements

We will be decorating the Sanctuary on **Saturday, December 18th around mid-day between 11am and 12pm**. Look for further details in our weekly announcements and emails. **EVERYONE** is invited to enjoy Christmas Cider and treats while we deck the Sanctuary halls!



MUSIC SUNDAY will be held this year on **Sunday, December 19th**. There will be joyful music and tidings from various "artists" as well as a coffee hour following. There will also be opportunities to help our Lowell School neighbors throughout the Christmas and Epiphany Seasons!

CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICES!



St. Paul's will be celebrating Christmas Eve this year in person!!! All are welcome to worship services in the Sanctuary at 2 pm and 8 pm. There will be a gift for children and grandchildren at both services, and the 2 pm worship will share the message of God's love for all of us through a child's experience of traveling to a new home.

In years past, St. Paul's has offered a Christmas Day Service. This year Matt and Pastor will be sharing a **CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE** with music and a message for all of you that will be posted on Christmas Morning on You Tube Premier. It will be available on Christmas Morning after 9 am!

December

5

Faith
Formation
Event

After Worship

8

ADVENT
BIBLE STUDY

(IN THE CHAPEL
AND
ONLINE)

7:30pm

15

ADVENT
BIBLE STUDY

(IN THE CHAPEL
AND
ONLINE)

7:30pm

19

MUSIC
SUNDAY

10:30am

22

ADVENT
BIBLE STUDY

(IN THE CHAPEL
AND
ONLINE)

7:30pm

24

CHRISTMAS
EVE
SERVICES

2pm & 8pm

25

MERRY
CHRISTMAS!

Church Office
Closed Dec
27th and Jan
3rd for the
Christmas and
New Year
Holidays.

26

SERVICE
WITH
TABOR
LUTHERAN
10:30am

at St. Paul's

Details: www.stpaulsinolney.org

5900 N. 5th Street. Phila, PA 19120

Announcements



Faith Formation held their first gathering this school year on December 5th! A great time was had by our intergenerational group writing cards, making gifts and ornaments, and learning about the messy and noisy place Jesus was to be born for us; because Jesus just couldn't wait to come into this world for God's love to be given to us.

Be a Lowell School Angel

It's that time of year again. The "Be a Lowell School Angel" tree will be in the Narathex starting December 8th. Tags on the tree are items that the school nurse can use for the children of Lowell. Please consider taking a tag off the tree and helping out. Place your gift under the tree with the tag you picked. Gifts are due by December 30th.



The Office will be closed Mondays, December 27th and January 3.

Council will meet in January over Zoom on Monday, January 10th, with **Executive** on January 6th.



The Food Pantry continues to serve the Olney Community and outside communities during the pandemic. Since March 16, we have given out more than 600 bags! This is a blessing!

If you would like to donate and support our Food Pantry, please contact Tara McFarland or our Office Coordinator, Courtney Williams during office hours.

THE LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE

If you would like to get involved in helping those who have been affected by IDA, the Synod website has ways to help. Financial Contributions can go to Lutheran Disaster Response-

Eastern PA:
Lutheran Congregational Services
7002 Butler Pike
Amber, PA 19002

#GivingTuesday is coming up at the end of the month on November 30th. Created in 2012, Giving Tuesday was created as an opportunity for people to give back to their communities and it has become an international act of generosity in and for local communities around the world. Watch for further updates. You can also check out the Facebook page for Lutheran Disaster Response - and see how LDR has been helping to care for those affected by recent storms, including IDA.

Go to ministrylink.org for more information

The Night the Chimes Rang- A Secular Christmas Story

Hundred of years ago, a woman of meager means lived in a small town with her two young sons, scraping by to feed, clothe, and house the family. Over the mountain was a city where the very wealthy people and the king lived. A magnificent cathedral with resounding chimes dominated the area, but nobody living had heard the chimes ring. Christmas Eve was a very sacred time when the cathedral was filled with people celebrating Christmas and anticipating the time when the chimes would ring again.

The boys' mother sent them off across the mountain with the few small coins she was able to give, and they walked off to a new experience. On the way, the boys heard a woman crying. She had fallen and was hurt and needed someone to stay with her. The older brother said, " Little Brother, you go on to the church and place our gift in the offering. I'll stay here." So, he went on by himself.

The cathedral was crowded. People believed that the most costly gift would please God and the chimes would ring. Many jewels were placed on the altar, but the chimes remained silent. Finally, the king even placed his crown on the altar, but no chimes. The people were confused and disappointed. At this time, Little Brother crept in unnoticed and placed his gift on the altar. The people were very startled and had no idea why the chimes were ringing. Then, Little Brother went back to meet his brother and return home. He never knew why the chimes rang; only that they were beautiful! He never knew that God was thanking him for his generosity, that his family's gift and faithfulness were so treasured by God!



Kathleen A. Kerin, Pastor
Matthew Brenner, Organist
Courtney L. Williams, Office Coordinator

PRAYER CARD

PRAYER FOCUS CARD

November-December 2021

*Make me to know your ways, O Lord;
teach me your paths. Ps. 25: 4*

- Sunday** Help me to prepare your path, O Lord.
- Monday** May I know your way and follow it all the days of my life.
- Tuesday** Take away the fear of self- examination.
- Wednesday** Help me to be quiet and rest in you.
- Thursday** Stir me up, God, to forever seek you.
- Friday** May I feel your divine presence, love, forgiveness and salvation in the body of the infant Jesus.
- Saturday** Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved. Ps. 80:7

Birthdays

Bernice Cleveland - 21st

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL
DECEMBER
BIRTHDAYS!**

**Please contact Courtney in the office
if you would like to be included in our
monthly birthday listings.**



Gary P. Winkler, Agent

6640 Rising Sun Ave.

Philadelphia, PA 19111

215-725-6900

www.bestphillyrates.com

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215-342-1040

Active Members of St. Paul's

Joseph DiPinto, Jr. · Walter Ernst Mehl, Jr. · Funeral Directors

1958-2021

Please pray for our servicemen and women.

To advertise in our

Newsletter,

please contact

Courtney in the office

for more information.

St. Paul's Mission

St. Paul's Church is a congregation in mission! Guided by our Mission Statement, we live according to these words: St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church is a Christ-centered community of faith in Olney, Committed to sharing with all people the Word of God, Spiritual Fellowship, and Christ's reality in our lives.