

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

January
2022

Newsletter
The Voice
St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church

**A Message
from our Pastor**

Dear Ones of Christ,

Good and Gracious blessings to each of you in this New Year! We will have journeyed together as Pastor and People for nearly ten months. And what a journey it has been! There is much to be mindful of as we begin the new year; finding ourselves in the Liturgical Season of Epiphany. Revelation, light, wisdom All things I would associate with the season of the three wise ones who visit Jesus at his birth.

The change of the seasons happens quarterly, turning us from Winter to Spring to Summer and to Fall. Interestingly, as we enter the Winter Season, the days have already begun to lengthen. Imperceptible at first, but unfolding to light nonetheless in the midst of cold months. Months that we tend to associate with dropping temperatures and darkness. A concept that is so often perceived as negative; bad or scary. Yet, here we are at the beginning of a cold and dark season praising the birth of the one who is our life and our light. The birth of a Savior who will never leave us to live out the tough challenges of living *or* the blessed joys within it. Here we are Celebrating Light. Revelation. Wisdom. ... in the darkest days of nature's seasons.

Bonhoeffer writes that the birth of Jesus will "be an authority over the hearts of people" and that the standing or falling of political realms will be at this same authority. He continues to write, "With the birth of Jesus, the great kingdom of peace has begun." Yes. The Great Kingdom of Peace. His beloved Maria writes to him while he is in prison; and she writes about such a King

dom; and a holy baby born ... at night.[1]

"I'm in the dark depths of night, and my thoughts are roaming far afield. Now that all the merry-making and rejoicing and candlelight are over and the noise and commotion of the day have been replaced by silence, inside and out, other voices can be heard ... the chill night wind and the mysterious darkness can open hearts and release forces that are unfathomable, but good and consoling ... Can you think of a better time than night-time? That's why Christ too, chose to come to us – with his angels – at night." [2]

In the darkness, we know that our hearts become open to perceiving the mysterious. In the darkness there is rest and growth. Think of a seed that readies for living ... in the darkness of the earth. It is true that our thoughts become laser focused in the dark. Many times growing on pent up fears. Yet, Jesus was born at night. A child born to be Savior of the World. Our Savior And our Peace. Rest your night fears with the baby, wrapped in strips of cloth. Born to us ... Christ the Lord. A child who is the Great Kingdom of Peace, and a child that leads us to live it.

Peace dear ones! Look to the hope and possibility of what Christ reveals to us. The joy of a community caring for one another in word and in deed.

Peace.

~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 mail the bulletin to those who do not have access to the internet. If you hear of someone who needs to be added to our list, 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

FAITH FORMATION will be paused until February.

Mark your calendars for Wednesday, February 9th at 6:00 pm and Sunday, February 20th after worship. We will meet in the Luther Room.

St. Paul's Council Meeting

The next Council meeting will be Monday, January 10th at 7:30pm on Zoom. The Executive Committee meets the Thursday prior on Zoom. Thanks for all you do to lead our congregation.

Communion

Communion will be offered on January 2nd and February 6th. We continue to use sealed wafer and wine kits; given out by Pastor at the base of the steps - inviting people to come forward to receive.

Senior Wednesdays

Senior Wednesdays will be paused for the month of January.

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

CHRISTMAS DECORATING

Thanks to those who came out on Saturday, December 18th and decorated the Sanctuary for Christmas. It was a beautiful gift for Christmas this year!

Matt Brenner
Tom Holmes
Chris Kelly
Karen Kelly
Darren Kelly
Connor McFarland
Jason Tapscott
Robin Miranda
Alexander
Elijah
Angelene Pinninti (Poinsettias)
Vinolia Bethala (Poinsettias)
Ann Farley (ornaments on the Holly Tree)
Pastor Kerin



Thank you to everyone who supported
**The "Be a Lowell School Angel"
tree!**

We collected 32 items for this project.
We appreciate your support!

Thank you to Tara Gladden for
spearheading the project.

Announcements



Congratulations to Connor McFarland on receiving his Eagle Scout rank. In order to receive this honor, Connor had to clear six ranks, earn at least 21 badges, and do a community service project. The ceremony will be held today at 3pm in the sanctuary. Well done, Conner!



CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICES!

We had three great services for the Christmas Season!

Go to our YouTube page to watch our Christmas Eve Services (2pm & 8pm) and our pre-recorded Christmas Day Service!



WEDNESDAYS AT THE TABLE

Beginning January 26th, 7:30pm-8:30pm, Pastor will be hosting a six-week online conversation at *Pastor's Kitchen Table* about "Using our Spiritual Gifts in Building Community."



The **LAY EUCHARIST TRAINING** Seminar for November was postponed because we didn't have enough people who could attend. We are planning for a training in February. If you are interested, please contact Ann Farley with your dates.



The Food Pantry continues to serve the Olney Community and outside communities during the pandemic. Since March 16, we have given out more than 650 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

.....Let your light so shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

Matthew 5:16

The above verse from Matthew chapter 5 follows verse 15 which tells us that, "No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house." During Epiphany, the season of light which is derived from the Greek and refers to appearance and is a celebration of the divinity of Christ. In our own lives, the Epiphany season beckons us to ponder how this light shines out in our lives as followers of Christ. We are invited to ask the questions, "What are my God-given gifts? How am I using them in God's service?"

The Eucharist gives the element of thanksgiving to Holy Communion, the sacrament of the altar. For many years, the ELCA has encouraged lay persons to be a part of administering the Eucharist, both in the Service and as a Eucharistic lay visitor. Why is this so important, you ask? Think of how you were nurtured by many people over the years, some who can no longer come to church to receive communion. During the course of the pandemic, this has become increasingly evident. People we prayed with, sang with, worked along side of, and socialized with who no longer come out to church. Being a Eucharistic lay visitor enables us to carry the Sacrament and to be a presence of the St. Paul's community to homebound members and friends.

You say, "This is all new to me. I wouldn't even know how to do this. I'd probably mess-up." At the present time there is one person who does this visitation. SEPA has a program that prepares Eucharistic lay visitors. This is a one-session training. St. Paul's hopes to host this program in February. Think about it. Pray about it. Contact Ann Farley at _____ questions you may have and with some February Saturday dates that you could be available. We are looking to accommodate time and transportation needs of lay visitors.

God bless you as you consider this opportunity.

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



PRAYER CARD

Prayer Focus Card Epiphany 2022

Where is the child who was born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising.
Matthew 2:2

Sunday - I give all praise to Jesus, the Light of the World.

Monday - Help me to celebrate that God is revealed in Jesus to the whole world.

Tuesday - Accept my life as the treasure I offer

Wednesday - Nourish me with the blessings of your scripture.

Thursday - Make me an instrument, Lord, of your peace.

Friday - Shine the light of your justice upon my heart.

Saturday - May I always strive to use the grace given me to bring to others the good news of Jesus Christ.

Birthdays

Anita Robinson - 22nd

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL
JANUARY
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

Se Habla Espanol



DiPinto – Mehl

Funeral Home

Personal Service – Dignity – Integrity
5720 Rising Sun Ave., Phila., PA 19120
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.