

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

June
2021

The Voice

Newsletter
St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church

A Message from our Pastor

Dear Beloveds in Christ,

I had the blessing to join a small, newly-begun gathering of friends who are also first-call Pastors this week. As we discussed the scripture and the Holy Spirit in our lives, we talked about the image of a weathervane and how it moves as the wind turns it and points in the direction the wind is blowing. Weathervanes are largely decorative these days. Although, I suspect if you are someone who flies planes...wind direction takes on important meanings for getting your plane up and into the right airstreams.

Oh how the Holy Spirit blows over us and points us in a direction to experience God! However, a weathervane that is frozen in place and doesn't move as the wind blows, while serving up beauty to the world around it – is essentially broken. It stays fixed in one direction, no matter what is going on around it.

The Gospel of John is known as a book of signs. Signs point the way to God, and when we are able to move as the Holy Spirit blows over and through us, we can also be signs that point to God. I have always considered it important to be "open" to God's leading. It's not as important to *know* as it is to be *open* to learn, to love, and to understand one another. As long as we recognize that in either case, it is God's work in us and not our own that makes these things possible.

The weathervane gives us an image to ponder as we look ahead to the coming summer months. The protocols for gathering in person throughout the City of Philadelphia are moving towards an "all-but-mask" plan. According to the Virologist from our SEPA Synod

webinar, we are entering a period of less drastic movement of the virus. We are learning to "live with" the virus in our midst, and this translates into opening our church building to more activity and more opportunities for welcoming others.

I encourage you to spend time in prayer and thought, laying open your own spirit to the breath and movement of the Trinity; especially the Holy Spirit. As the month of June unfolds, take some time to think about how it is that you can be like that weathervane – pointing to God's love for others. How can St. Paul's be like that weathervane; grounded in love and open to welcome and point to where God leads.

⁵ Jesus answered, "I assure you, unless someone is born of water and the Spirit, it's not possible to enter God's kingdom. ⁶ Whatever is born of the flesh is flesh, and whatever is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Don't be surprised that I said to you, 'You must be born anew.' ⁸ God's Spirit^[b] blows wherever it wishes. You hear its sound, but you don't know where it comes from or where it is going. It's the same with everyone who is born of the Spirit." John 3:5-8

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Kathleen

Virtual Worship

with St. Paul's

Worshipping Together at Home has been 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 its 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.

Please come together to meet and greet one another outside on the front porch after worship. Pastor is looking to have treats each week, depending on the weather. If you would like to contribute, please DO! It can be as simple as a granola bar (individually packaged) or small packages of cookies or any other individually packaged treat. Bring it with you and, if you can, please let the office know ahead of time!



St. Paul's Council Meeting

The next Council meeting will be Monday, June 14 at 7:30pm. The meeting will take place on Zoom. Please have your reports in to Courtney by Thursday, June 10th by noon. Courtney will send them out by Thursday afternoon to give members time to read them. Later reports will be emailed on Monday morning.

Thanks for all you do to lead our congregation.



Zoom Coffee Hour with Pastor



Pastor's Zoom Coffee Hour will continue during the month of June. We enjoy our time talking together about what's happening at St. Paul's and sharing our weeks. As more people come to worship in-person, we will be considering new alternatives to get together. Keep your eye on the bulletin for news.

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!

Current COVID SAFETY INFORMATION for Houses of Worship

Based on a presentation from the SEPA Synod, we are able to make some adjustments to the reopening program we already have in place:

- Currently, 50% of indoor capacity is maximum allowed for in-person gatherings.
- Masks are required to be worn at all times while in the building.
- Washing your hands and using hand sanitizer is important.
- Social distancing requirements remain in place.
- Temperature checks will be paused.
- Sign-ins will continue to be required, but RSVP's have been discontinued.
- Length of worship can increase.
- Limited walking during the worship service is acceptable.
- Soft singing liturgical responses with masks is possible indoors and outdoors.
- Coffee hour outdoors is permissible.
- Books may be used in the pews; please take one when you arrive.



Please continue to maintain safe physical distances when we gather for in-person events. Limit your time inside by arriving on time and exiting for out-door visiting.

Things are changing over the next several weeks; please continue to read your emails and bulletin announcements.

PLEASE NOTE...

The Church building is beginning to open up slowly. We have welcomed back the AA Group to meet. We are planning a summer activity program for children in July. The Food Pantry continues to serve the needs of the food insecure here in Philly by providing pre-bagged food for people who come to the front door. The Sanctuary is open for prayer when people call Pastor ahead of time. Vaccinations will help us to be open sooner; many places are offering walk-in opportunities.

While we do not yet have a fully open building, Pastor and Courtney are in the building on a regular basis. If you need to come down to the church, please simply give Courtney a call to let her know that you will be in. If you are in possession of a church key, please let Courtney know you are in the building when you arrive. The Food Pantry is here twice a week and uses the front vestibule and Chapel. While we are in-person for worship and the Atrium and Bathroom have been open, the remainder of the building still needs to be readied before we can use it. Sophia Academy will also be in session during some of the summer months.

SUMMER FUN!



A midweek summer Children's activity time is coming in July, running from JULY 7th through JULY 28TH beginning at 6:00 pm! Mark your calendars for some fun! Look for more information in our weekly Worship Bulletin and in next month's VOICE!

PROGRESS!



Congratulations are in order for a team of folks (that included St. Paul's Swarna Sithya) for their success in work that enabled the approval of both U.S. and European for Covid-19 medications to help those who are sick with Covid!! She has received approval from both the FDA and European Medical Approval for the treatment of mild to moderate COVID-19 adults and children older than 12!!

SERVING IN WORSHIP



Wouldn't it be great to hear different voices in our worship? Some people hear low voices better, some hear high voices easier. Share the Good News by signing up to be a part of the Worship Service on Sunday mornings by reading the two Lessons for the day. Call the Church Office if you would like to join us! It's been a while, not to be concerned!

Pastor Kathleen will work with you to be comfortable!

CONNECT WITH A LARGER CHURCH

SEPA, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the ELCA offers many resources for individuals and congregations. Subscribe to Ministry Link for free, and learn about what is going on in our area.

Click below to view the website

<https://ministrylink.org>



KATIE'S
CLIPBOARD
 ~St. Paul's Food Pantry~
 "...For God loves a cheerful giver."
 -2 Corinthians 9:7b
 Mondays & Wednesdays
 9am-12pm



The Food Pantry continues to serve the Olney Community and outside communities during the pandemic. Since March 16, we have given out more than 525 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.



Hello St. Paul's! **Just a couple updates/reminders:**

1. Weekly Dedication (Garden of Sweet Memories) requests are to be sent via email (stpauls19120@gmail.com) or by phone (215-424-4800) to me no later than the Tuesday prior to the Sunday it is to appear (by 12pm). Please include your phone number with your requests. All checks should be sent to the church as well or submitted via our online platform (put Altar Guild on the memo line). For those who would like a printed version of their dedication, please let me know in your email and send your address as well just in case. I will send out a copy of the at-home

worship bulletin with the dedication.

2. The deadline for articles or announcements to be included in "The Voice" is the 15th of every month.
3. Please also make sure to **only** send emails to **stpauls19120@gmail.com** as this is the main email account.
4. Make sure to leave your contact information when you leave voicemails in the office.

If you need any assistance with anything, please don't hesitate to give me a call in the office during office hours.

Have a great June!

Courtney

Generosity = Stewardship

Generosity is defined as readiness or liberality in giving; freedom from meanness or smallness of mind or character; a generous act. Thoughts of generosity and being generous cover a vast amount of territory which can be secular or faith based. Being generous sets us free to give away kindness, compassion and respect. As Christians we learn that through God's grace, we freely receive God's gifts and have permission to use these gifts. We are all different, unique, and able to be generous in different ways. Generosity connects with Stewardship because Stewardship has to do with every aspect of living out our personal faith - including creation, lifestyle, gifts, finances and callings/vocation. Generosity has to do with everyday talents- things we do well and can share with others- such as cooking, hospitality, donating to Katie's Cupboard, teaching Sunday School, cleaning, gardening and making phone calls to name a few. In Galatians 5:22, St. Paul identifies generosity as a fruit of the (Holy) Spirit.



Some of us have been taught to view stewardship solely as a campaign to gather funds to support the operations of the church. This is a small portion of the larger view and includes financial support. Financial support is important, but it does not stand alone. We are asked to take all aspects of Stewardship seriously.

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

