

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

May
2021

The Voice

Newsletter
St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church

A Message from our Pastor

Dear Beloveds,

Grace and Peace to you! May the love of Christ surround you, fill you, go before you, and walk beside you as you go forth to love and serve the people you meet along your journey today.

There is a wonderful book I have, written by one of my seminary professors. One of its stories has caught me hook, line, and sinker, and it's one that I continue to hold in my soul. The story centers around the idea of a spoon.

A spoon feeds us. It provides life and sustenance throughout our journey of living. When we are born, we need help to be nourished and sustained. We have no way of knowing *how* to feed ourselves, only that we need to be fed. As we grow, we learn to feed ourself using first our hands and then utensils. As we move through life, we may come to a place where we can no longer manage to take in that which will sustain us. Someone else must help.

Throughout it all, the spoon is basically a gift of life. What would it mean to think about how we are both fed and feed others by the love and care of Christ? How to we share Christ with those we live with, those we work with, those we go to school with, and those we meet along the way?

"In its beginning and to its end, human life requires feeding. Somebody had to feed us, or we wouldn't be here. To be spoon fed is a sign of vulnerability; we are either too young or too infirm to feed ourselves, yet it is also a revelation of relationship. To stretch out a spoon is to extend a table of hospitality in God's name and for Christ's sake." (Heather Murray Elkins, Holy Stuff of Life, Pilgrim Press, OH, 2006. p. 11.)

Beloveds. Christ walks with you in each step and on every journey. In preparing the disciples for his death, Christ promised that the Holy Spirit would be given to them; that the Holy Spirit would abide with them. Christ HAS Risen – He has Risen Indeed! And we can be sure that we are never alone, and that Christ goes with us into the smallest or the greatest steps that we will walk today. We can be sure that Christ feeds us with his deep and abiding love, always. Being fed is, indeed, a revelation of relationship; one we have with each other and with Christ.

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



In-Person Easter Worship

We continue to remain open for Worship on Sundays! Worship begins at 10:30 so plan to arrive about 10 minutes early to be checked in and find your seat. You will be asked to add your name to an attendance list, but it is most-likely the RSVP's will no longer be necessary.

If you feel more comfortable remaining home for worship, we will continue to livestream on Facebook each week. Please know, though, that you are missed! I am looking forward to greeting each of you in person soon.

We remain on a no-movement policy in the sanctuary during worship, which includes remaining seated at all times. I will also continue leading the worship with Matt, our Organist. This includes all of the reading as well. I

am hopeful, however, to be adding some different voices within the coming weeks. Please let us know if you have trouble hearing during the service.

I do encourage you to leave the sanctuary as soon as possible after worship concludes. I will be outside to greet and chat with each of you. It is much safer to be outside together.

Grace and Peace as we move forward in new ways as the Body of Christ,

Pastor



St. Paul's Council Meeting

The next Council meeting will be Monday, April 12 at 7:30pm. The meeting will take place on Zoom.

Stewardship Meeting

The next Stewardship meeting will take place on Thursday May 13 at 1:30pm via Zoom.

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!

SPRING SPRUCE

Spring has sprung and so have the daffodils that grace the flower beds of St. Paul's. On Saturday, April 3rd, the day before Easter, a faithful crew of gardeners worked to pick-up trash, weed flower beds, trim up shrubbery and spread mulch around the Church. When we had finished, we had a great feeling of pride in our accomplishments. But we were also happy to spend time together with members of our St. Paul's family. (masked and socially distant of course!)

Many thanks to:

Tom Holmes	Robin Miranda
Roger Zepernick	Ashley Miranda
Rich Hayes	Jessica Miranda
Gary Wagner	Elijah Miranda
Pastor Kathleen	Alexander Miranda
Wayne Geisser	Lynn Geisser



If you were unable to join us in April, fear not. We will have an autumn clean-up session too! Stay tuned for further information and the date.

Thank you again to all.

Lynn Geisser

COMMUNITY PRAYER VIGIL TO END GUN VIOLENCE



A vigil for gun violence that was held on Friday, April 23rd at 11 am on the street corner of Tabor Lutheran Church, sponsored by Philadelphia's Black Clergy Association. St. Paul's Ann Farley represented our congregation and participated with people and pastors Jane Marston and Sozinho Alves from the congregations of both Tabor and Zion Lutheran. Each person had an opportunity to read scriptures of both care and lament for the pain and struggle our communities are facing in the wake of increasing gun violence in our communities. A candle burned as these faithful followers of Christ read and prayed aloud. Their witness continued as each shared stories of how gun violence has affected their lives. Ann said that at times their words competed with the noise of traffic passing by; but I am so grateful for the standing witness of these seven people.

There will be another vigil on Saturday, May 15th at 12 noon at Prince of Peace. I will be attending, and I would love to have a few from our St. Paul's community join me. Look for more information to come.

Pastor Kathleen

SEPA's 33rd Annual Synod Assembly Update

I attended the online Event on Saturday, April 24th. It was incredibly well-organized in which we were able to vote and see all of the accomplishments and challenges of both 2019 and 2020. (There was no Assembly last year.) There are currently 143 congregations in the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod.

What follows is some of the areas that you might be interested in looking at a little more closely. The Bulletin of Reports is extensive on Synod's site ministrylink.org. The link is listed below. The Treasurer's Report and Budget were approved; most notably, the Budget for 2022, ending on 1/21/23 was unanimously approved with no contrary decisions. Bishop Davenport noted it was a first.

The Bishop's message came fairly early in the day's events. She encouraged us to move forward in the Spirit and know that God continues to make a way, even when the road is difficult to see.

Bishop reminded us of ALL that we have lost and noted Psalm 73's lament in which we are reminded that God is continually with us. God meets us and keeps us moving forward.

We have come a long way and we know the Lord has made a way ... in life and death. When we reflect on the words of scripture, what are we to say? If God is for us, who is against us? Who will separate us from the love of Christ? She reminded us that we are walking together on the road, causing a ripple of faith that will transform lives.

You can watch her message in its entirety here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iVZP4z1JCK8>

Tracey Beasley's (President of Synod Council) Message: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WUtSY90A5IE>

I draw particular attention for you on the Bulletin of Reports regarding the Social Ministry Organizations (Section E -11). There is great work being done with many partnering organizations that SEPA participates in support with – because of the support local congregations continue to offer. I have worked with the Silver Springs Martin Luther School to bring an afternoon summer activity for the students who live on the campus. It is tremendous that we can support the strength-building and care for youth and children.

The 2020 Churchwide Report has some good stuff (Section H-14). Check out these items and more:

Children, Youth, and Young Adult Ministries and the **Holy Innovations (Grief Transition Project) program** (pages 7 & 8). There is a large resource available in these 16 pages that can serve to inspire and encourage our congregation for growth in learning and service to our community.

Another section of the ELCA Churchwide Report dealt with the Initiative from Bishop Easton began in 2020 – **The Innovation Lab** (pages 14 & 15). It is a great place to begin thinking about how our congregation might engage new ideas for new spaces.

Churchwide had some terrific numbers to share as well. Money that was given to help two major areas this past year:

COVID-19 Funds – Grants were contributed to 63 Synods totaling 1.8 million providing for over 400,000 people in need.

ELCA World Hunger raised \$300,000 in 14 days from 56 Synods and 37 states. Matching funds supported 200+ congregations. The need for hunger support programs will remain high as we move through the Covid Recovery and discover just how hard it has hit people and communities.

While the pandemic has caused drops in budget areas, as you would expect, there were also some bright spots. Funds were provided to increase the assistance at Food Pantries, the initiative Blessed to be a Blessing to help out congregations in need, and money was provided for Bishop Munga of our companion Synod in Tanzania to come to the US for treatment.

The Full Treasurer's Report: <https://ministrylink.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/FINAL-2021-Treasurers-Report-and-Budget-WIDE-041921-1.pdf>

SEPA Assembly Page with videos on the forums that were held prior to the Assembly and a listing of the associated documents:

<https://ministrylink.org/about/synod-assembly-2021/2021-assembly-documents/>

Feel free to contact me if you have questions or ideas!

~Pastor Kathleen



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 500 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 May!

Courtney

UPDATED CONTACT INFORMATION IS GOOD STEWARDSHIP

The Stewardship Team at St. Paul's is looking to update records of members and friends. Every year there are boxes of offering envelopes that are not picked up. There are many reasons for this, and the Stewardship Team is seeking to establish an efficient system for making contact with all who are affiliated with the church. We ask that you inform us if any of your contact information has changed including address, telephone number, e-mail address, or if you have changed your membership status such as having moved and taken membership with another church. This would involve requesting a transfer of membership. Please contact the office at 215-424-4800 or stpauls19120@gmail.com to keep us updated.



Some benefits of St. Paul's having your current contact information are getting church mailings promptly and receiving the VOICE online if requested. The church can contact you quickly should the need arise. Supplying current information contributes to good stewardship with the use of offerings and gifts made to the church. Thanks for your help!

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

Announcements



Birthdays

Whitmore Scholarship applications are now being accepted for the fall semester.

Please submit your application to Chris Brenner by email: (cfbrenner@icloud.com)

by May 28 and include your most recent transcript.

Call the office if you need a copy emailed to you.

Thank you!

Lillian Weber - 1st
Dolores Crimian - 13th

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL MAY BIRTHDAYS!

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



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To advertise in our

Newsletter,

please contact

Courtney in the office

for more information.

Please pray for our servicemen and women.

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.