

PROCLAIMING A TIMELESS CHRIST IN A CHANGING WORLD



THE SPIRE

SAINT PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH ✠ CUMBERLAND, MARYLAND

2020 CONGREGATION OFFICERS

President:
Dr. Burton Streicher
Vice President:
Kathleen Ball
Secretary:
Debbie Szymanski
Treasurer:
Stephanie Wade

2020 CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEMBERS

Education (Faith Formation):
Debbie Metheny
Evangelism:
Cecil Bell
Finance:
Suzanne Umstott
Ministry in Daily Life:
Nancy Lohr
Property:
Edward Ayers
Social Ministry (Fellowship):
Cindy Read
Stewardship:
Burton Streicher
Worship and Music:
Kathleen Ball
Youth:
Gary Miller

STEVE HAPTONSTAHL
Interim Pastor

DAVID RANKIN
Director of Music

DEBBIE SZYMANSKI
Parish Assistant

STEPHANIE WADE
Treasurer

RAMON ROCHE CARDONA
Sexton

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APRIL 2020

Dear friends in Christ:

As we all complete 15 days of staying *mostly* at home to try to stay safe, with the COVID-19 virus making its way around the globe and across the country, and we move into complying with our Governor's newly issued **Stay at Home** directive, I'd like to salute some dear friends: Saint Paul's **shut-in members**, whose experience enduring separation from the outside world qualifies them as our **leaders** navigating this strange wilderness of the Coronavirus Pandemic of 2020. The message for these folks, our exemplars of waiting on the Lord in hope, and now for every one of us, is that as *isolated* as most of us may be, *we are not alone*. We are one in the Spirit; we are one in the Lord.

To make it possible for the most of us who are new at this separation to express that spiritual bond, and to voice our admiration and support to our veteran shut-ins, there is a separate page after the body of this month's *Spire* with names and addresses of our current home- or facility-bound friends. Say hi as you are able, by phone or in a note, to these friends who, from their bed or wheelchair, are setting the pace for us to "run with perseverance [and patience] the race that is set before us."

As I try to follow my own above advice with our shut-ins, I hope also, during this coming month, to visit (by way of a good old 19th century technological device known as a "telephone"), with as many as I can of the rest of you with whom I have been worshipping, engaging in personal prayer, sharing meals and study sessions, and reaching out to our community for the past 17 months. My tenure as your Interim Pastor is wrapping up, so we will be saying heartfelt goodbyes (or "auf wiedersehen," which in German means "toward seeing you again"). I will hold you in my prayers, grateful for the time you and I have had to live, pray, and work together. On May 1 you will welcome your new Pastor, Ryan Viands, and I sense that this will be a good fit for Ryan and all of you. God love you, and may God guide you through this passing trial-by-virus into an Eastertide and beyond full of the joy and glory of the Resurrection. The peace of the Lord be with you all!

Ever faithfully yours in Christ,
Pastor Steve

Our office will be open on a limited basis during this time. Please do not hesitate to call us if you need assistance:
Pastor Steve 218-343-4183
Debbie Szymanski 301-697-4891
Stephanie Wade 240-522-2645

A Word from the President

The church council met on March 10, 2020. Much has happened since that meeting. On 8 March, Pastor Ryan Viands was approved unanimously by the congregation to be called as our pastor. Debbie Szymanski and I signed and forwarded the official letter of call from the congregation to the synod last week to complete our actions. Pastor Viands will start during the first week in May. In other news, the city and historical society disapproved our plan to place a small black chain-link fence around the Smallwood Street yard on March 11, 2020 which means we will need to rethink our approach to protecting the grass. We were able to complete the installation of new floor tile in the classroom downstairs that had developed loose tiles. Also, the carpet was removed and new tile placed in the old nursery and the ramp in the hallway. These were needed health and safety requirements which are good to get completed.

Unfortunately, on 19 March 2020, we determined that we would be safe and prudent to follow the government's guidelines as well as suggestions from the ELCA Delaware-Maryland Synod and shut down large group activities and worship services at St. Paul's until 1 April. The federal government and the Governor of Maryland have now advised us that the shut-down should be continued and all large group activities should be cancelled until the end of April. With these recommendations we have determined that St. Paul's will now be closed throughout the month of April. At this point it appears that our first worship service may now be with Pastor Ryan on 3 May 2020. There will be no Bountiful Blessings sessions in April, no APPS Wednesday sessions, and no council meeting as well on the 14th of April. It is still not clear whether this closure of events needs to be continued past the end of April or not. The church building will continue to be open on a limited basis with Debbie Szymanski and Ramon Roche Cardona providing essential emergency services and security.

We are well into the season of Lent and have been required to give up perhaps much more than we had planned during this time.

Please embrace this at-home time we now have with your families and find opportunities to nurture your relationships. We are conducting on-line Wednesday mid-week Lenten services at 6:30pm and Sunday LOFT Bible studies at 11:00am. If you are interested in participating please contact Debbie Streicher. The council will keep the congregation advised and continue to monitor how the coronavirus epidemic progresses and what actions are recommended by the government.

Prayers and Blessings in this Lenten season,

(Burt Streicher, Council President)



Pastor Ryan Viands

Pastor Robin Simpson-Litton
Assistant to the Bishop

The Luther League Puppet Ministry Team News

Countdown to Easter

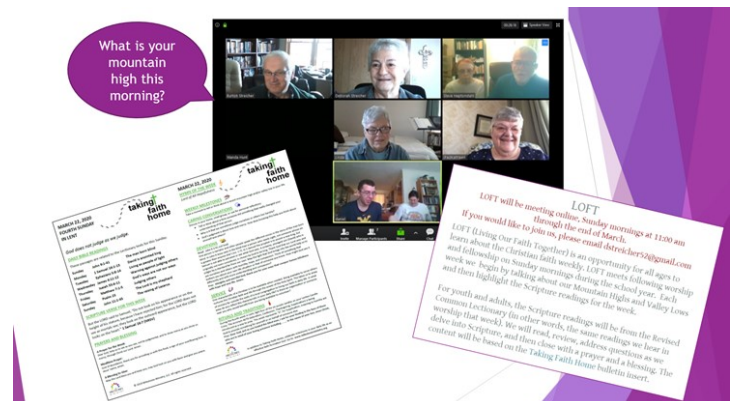


The Luther League puppet ministry team is saddened to announce that **Countdown to Easter**, originally planned for Wednesday, April 8th, as a presentation for APPS children, youth, and families will be cancelled. We will miss sharing the all-time favorite Bunny Song with the children, but as the chorus reminds us, *"It's all about J-E-S-U-S!"*. There are plans for incorporating the song during VBS this summer.

We are also going to miss telling the story of Holy Week through scripture readings and hymns in local senior residences as part of an Easter Vigil tradition this year.

Many thanks to those who were prepared to help with our presentation in April. Stay tuned! We look forward to plans for being part of openings and closings for Vacation Bible School in June. If you'd like to help, please contact Debbie Streicher at dstreicher52@gmail.com or 703-303-7255.

LOFT Living Our Faith Together Meeting Online



Due to worship and all activities being cancelled, LOFT began meeting online at 11:00 am on Sunday mornings using Zoom meeting. This will continue to be the venue throughout the quarantine we are experiencing in our homes.

If you have not joined LOFT before, consider doing so now as a way to connect and check in with others from the congregation.

If you would like to join us, please contact Debbie Streicher at dstreicher52@gmail.com.

Not familiar with Zoom?

We are happy to help.

Due to Governor Hogan's executive order we are unable to order and receive Easter plants. If you have paid for a plant, your money will be returned to you.

Mortimer C. and Elizabeth Ann Schaidt Scholastic Tuition Fund

On April 15th St. Paul's will begin accepting applications for the Mortimer C. and Elizabeth Ann Schaidt Scholastic Tuition Fund for the 2020-2021 academic year. Instructions and the application form can be found online by visiting www.stpaulcumberland.org or by requesting the information from the church office. The scholarship is competitive and available only to members of St. Paul's. The award can be used for the payment of tuition only at an accredited institution offering a 2 or 4 year degree, graduate degree, technical or vocational training. In order to establish the applicant as a member, the applicant must have communed **and** contributed – in their own name - at least once in the past year. Additional questions should be directed to Debbie Metheny: stpaulsscholarship2015@gmail.com.
Applications are due by June 15, 2020.

Bowersox and Frick Scholarship Information

Separate letter of application must be submitted for each scholarship.

Address all applications to the Vestry of St. Paul's Lutheran Church. **ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED IN THE CHURCH OFFICE BY 4:00 PM ON JUNE 26th.**

The **GLADYS FRICK MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP** is available for young adults who are members of St. Paul's Lutheran Church or whose parents are members. To qualify as an applicant you must be a current high school graduate accepted at a four-year college, two-year junior college, community college, nursing school or accredited trade school.

This award shall be made to the applicant who has the highest level of scholastic achievement during his/her senior year in high school.

Please include the following information:

- a) name and telephone number
- b) home address and college address (if known)
- c) senior year transcript
- d) any comment you, the applicant, wish to make (list school at which you have been accepted.)

The **BOWERSOX MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP** is available for all members of St. Paul's or for young adults whose parents are members. To qualify as an applicant, you must be a high school graduate, accepted by either a graduate school, a four-year college, a two-year college, a community college, nursing school or an accredited trade school either as a part-time or as a full-time student.

This award shall be made on the basis of need and the expressed determination of the student to gain this educational experience.

Please include the following information:

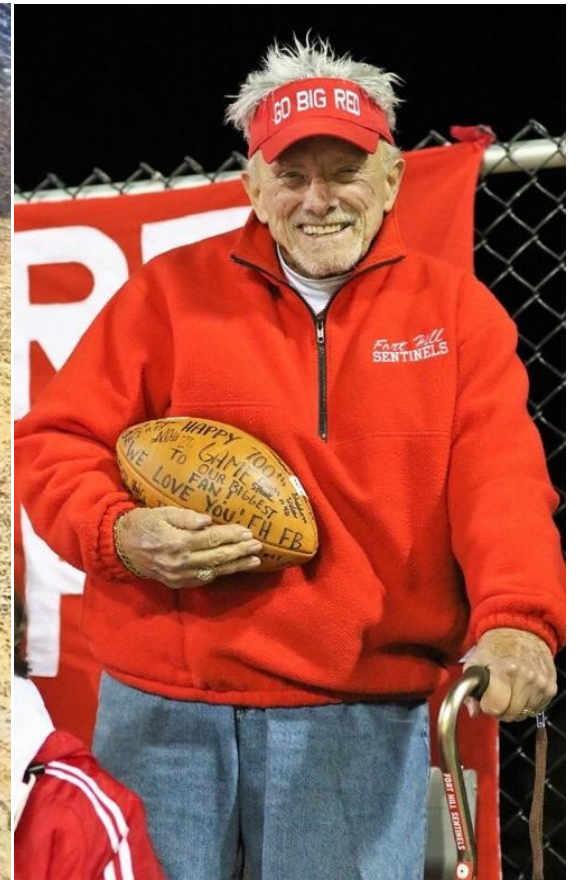
- a) name and telephone number
- b) home address and college address (if known)
- c) major course of study
- d) the degree for which you, the applicant, are a candidate and the date it is expected to be awarded
- e) last semester's grade transcripts
- f) list school at which you have been accepted
- g) expected cost for the year
- h) the amount you, the applicant, expect to earn
- i) any loan which you, the applicant, or your parents have previously obtained for the purpose of defraying schooling costs
- j) a statement concerning the need for assistance
- k) any comment you, the applicant, wish to make



APRIL BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARY

- 2 – Daniel Highland
9 – Patty Graham
12 – Linda Zeller
17 – Joe Graham
18 - 1960 - Sabra (Hast) and Art Isom –
First couple married in current sanctuary
20 – Dot Rhoads
21 – Larry Goldizen
22 - Gary Miller
29 – Kathleen Ball

Rena
Christopher
thanks all
who
supported
and donated
to her
Hooley
Plunge
effort!



CHRISTOPHERS AND THE COMMUNITY!!

We see Rena and Dave at St. Paul's on Sundays, but their activities outside of that morning also keep them very busy. Recently Rena accepted the challenge and not only made the chilly dive into Lake Habeeb at Rocky Gap for the Hooley Plunge, but raised a sizeable amount of money for the Special Olympics. Aside from this, Rena helps here at St. Paul's each Wednesday cooking/baking for APPS, volunteers with VBS, teaches the kids in Children's Church, serves as a greeter and the occasional crucifer. She also helps make wonderful apple butter for four weeks in the fall at Davis Memorial Methodist Church.

As we all know, Fort Hill High School is their passion, especially Dave, who was recently honored for attending his 700th consecutive football game!! 700!!!! He hasn't missed a game since Turkey Day, 1956. WOW! Yes, **RED** is his "most-favorite" color of all! Just ask him! Dave is a charter member of the F Club and Rena is a member of the "We Are Fort Hill" committee. Her phone rings to the tune of the Fort Hill fight song. Oh yes, they love Fort Hill, and Fort Hill loves them back. Go Big Red!

In their "spare time", there are 11 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren that they love and care for.

We, too, love you, Rena & Dave, and thank God for your dedication to the church, your family and our beloved community.

LOFT Potlucks Resume in the Fall



The St. Patrick's Day LOFT Potluck was well received and enjoyed by all. Many thanks to Debbie Szymanski for making the King's cake, to all who brought toppings, and to Pastor Steve and Cecil for making and flipping pancakes. Plans to begin meeting again in the fall are taking place as we identify milestone moments in the life of our congregation. The goal is to provide an opportunity for all ages to gather around a meal, engage in caring conversations, and recognize God in the moment.

Vacation Bible School 2020 June 22 -26



Vacation Bible School meetings will be taking place online until further notice. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday evening, April 7th at 7:30 pm. As St. Paul Lutheran faith formation team works together with 7 other congregations in the Cumberland area, we are planning for a fun-filled week with families and friends. The theme this year is Rocky Railway. Please mark your calendars now!

Questions? Contact Debbie Streicher at dstreicher52@gmail.com.



Worship

Our response to Covid-19 is to provide you with a variety of digital resources for worship and faith formation as well as sending sermons and updates in emails.

For those who do not receive emails or have access to the internet, please notify us and we will send you the sermon and Taking Faith Home via mail.

On our website, stpaulcumberland.org, there are links to digital worship from the Delaware Maryland Synod. There will also be regular updates on the St. Paul Facebook page with links to faith formation resources and more.

We have been notified that the Union Rescue Mission is in desperate need of formula, diapers, baby food, cleaning supplies, and monetary donations. They have 18 children there now and many more that they are serving in homes.

If anyone is interested in making a donation, it would be greatly appreciated by the URM. If you are concerned about going out to purchase items to drop off, a suggestion to order supplies and ship directly to them is a great alternative. The address is below:

Union Rescue Mission
of Western Maryland
16 Queen City Pavement
Cumberland, MD 21502



St. Paul's made a donation of non-perishable food items to the Western Maryland Meal Response Team.



Have you heard about AmazonSmile?

AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organization of your choice.

St. Paul's is now an eligible charity that you can choose. Go to www.amazon.com and under "Your Lists" choose "AmazonSmile Charity Lists"; Click on "Get started." Next search for:

St Paul S Lutheran Church

There are hundreds of St. Paul Lutheran Churches listed so ensure you select the one listed for Cumberland, MD. After you register, 0.5% of your purchases will be donated to our congregation.

Remember when you make a purchase that you have to be on the smile.amazon.com web page rather than Amazon.com for the program to work. We intend to use whatever funds are generated by this program to support our faith formation and outreach ministries. Thank you for helping our St. Paul's ministries.

Burt Streicher
Stewardship Committee Chairman

Dear Pastor and Members,

The Interfaith Community Pantry, Inc. would like to thank your church and its members for your support. During 2019 your church and members gave the following donations:

Monies from members:	\$177.00
Monies from church	\$236.60
Number of food items	314
Number of non-food items	2

Through your donations of food and/or money, the pantry was able to serve the many individuals and families that were referred to us who were in need of emergency food. During 2019 the pantry received 1,862 referrals which represents 5,258 people. Those served during the year received 35,292 items of food and 9,220 miscellaneous food items. Our clients received vouchers for perishable food that amounted to \$29,785.00. We also distributed 11,232 commodity food items.

The pantry has been in operation since the early 1960s with the help from churches, organizations and individuals. The pantry has no paid employees, yet we are able to operate the pantry five days a week from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. with the help of many volunteers. The volunteers from area churches give of their time to keep the pantry open week after week.

Again, thank you and your members for their continued support.

Sincerely,

Linda Stewart
Secretary



The Interfaith Community Pantry, Inc.
301 Cumberland Street
301-777-7882

The Interfaith Community Pantry would like to invite more members of our supporting churches to participate in the work of helping those in need of emergency food. We are reaching out to you. We are aware of your kindness and support but we are asking for you to encourage more help from your congregation.

There is a need for more volunteers. If any members of your congregation would be willing to help it would be appreciated. Substitute volunteers work an average of six hours a month and regularly scheduled volunteers work an average of three hours per week.

Anyone interested in helping can contact our Coordinator of Volunteers, Twylah Stewart on Wednesdays from 10:00 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. at the above phone number.

Thank you for your consideration,

Linda Stewart
Secretary

Post-COVID-19-Script: The Coronavirus *Recovery* can be an Opportunity

Michael Berkowitz is a student of disaster: a veteran of New York City's office of emergency management in the aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks and global risk management at Deutsche Bank, and more recently founder of the nonprofit Resilient Cities Catalyst. Now we are (as Berkowitz, among many others, argues) just at the tip of the iceberg of the Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic, but Berkowitz is looking ahead. Here are quotes from a March 23, 2020, Berkowitz interview with think tank CityLab's Laura Bliss:

- One way or another, in the coming months or later, we will break the chain of [COVID-19] transmission. Then we're going to look up and have our small businesses hurting or closed, our most poor and vulnerable people suffering, lots of people in the middle class who didn't have safety nets or full-time employment looking for work, the stigmatization of various ethnic, racial, or demographic groups who we think might have done things to put us at risk — all of this is going to stress our society so significantly.

And when that next phase hits, that's when we'll see benefits of [community] resilience — of neighbors checking in on each other, strong neighborhood institutions, diverse economies, good governance. Those things will pay off in ways that will let us rebound from this situation and hopefully let us build stronger communities.

The thing is, we're still so early in. A week of staying at home feels like forever, but we're just at the very tip of the iceberg in many ways. We'll see which communities are more or less resilient in the next months and years to come.

- We know there can be an amazing bond among people who survive things like this together. The sociologist Enrico Quarantelli found that in disasters and immediately after there is a lot of good will and community spirit. As many of us are seeing now and hearing anecdotally, people are smiling more and helping each other. This sense that we'll get through this together is really important.

- We know that cities with the strongest and most robust civic networks pull through the best in disaster — the more you know your neighbors and understand your community boards and really can get engaged, the stronger and more resilient you are.

If we can get engaged with each other, we can be more prepared for the next thing that is coming. Thinking really intentionally about how to build more resiliency with every intervention we take is going to be critical to taking this crisis and turning it into an opportunity. Just because we're focused rightly on this incredible thing does not mean there are not more crises waiting for us. Because, look, hurricane season starts in June.

Pastor Steve's observation: *You at Saint Paul's have been and are very much a part of your community in many ways — through your many (and often unnoticed) individual initiatives and efforts, and through your engagement with the community as a church looking to the needs of the people of Cumberland and beyond. I applaud your faith-driven good works.*

You will be a part of Cumberland's vibrant future.

