

PROCLAIMING A TIMELESS CHRIST IN A CHANGING WORLD

SINCE 1794



THE SPIRE

SAINT PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH † CUMBERLAND, MARYLAND

2021 CONGREGATION OFFICERS

President:

Suzanne Umstott

Vice President:

Kathleen Ball

Secretary:

Debbie Szymanski

Treasurer:

Stephanie Wade

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August 2021

Pastor's Ponderings

Yes. Yes. Yes

+

Not all Christians are comfortable lifting up the lives of the saints of the Church. For one thing, those life stories reveal God's knack for getting too close for comfort—especially in the case of Saint Mary, the Virgin, where that closeness reached its ultimate level. Those of us with something to hide (i.e.-that is to say, ALL of us), don't always welcome God's nearness if we are truly honest with ourselves.

Our uneasiness has to do in part with God's high expectations of those who believe. We are uneasy about the saints' resounding (and astounding) "YES" in the face of those expectations. That one very young girl would be ready to conceive, carry, and care for God's only Son is nothing short of staggering. That one country carpenter (St. Joseph) would stand with her in those early days of exhilaration and shame is mind-boggling. That one popular preacher (St. John) would stick his neck out to declare an itinerant rabbi and Son of God is overwhelming to consider.

Yet however, all this saintly willingness to serve at God's calling is merely a glimmering reflection of the love of the one who prayed in the garden, "Not my will be done Oh Lord, but yours be done alone."

In St. Luke's account of the Annunciation, Blessed Mary was perplexed by the meaning of God's word to her and yet chose to accept the wondrous servanthood which it ordained her to accomplish. After the birth of her son, Mary continued to be puzzled whenever she met with a further sign of his divine origin or with hints of what he was meant to do. But she was always patient in her puzzlement; in St. Luke's words, "Mary treasured all; these things and pondered them in her heart." The fruit of her pondering may be reflected in the fact that all the evangelists say that she followed her son from Galilee to Jerusalem and stood with the small company of women who witnessed his gruesome crucifixion. The Acts of the Apostles in the scriptures adds that, after the resurrection, she shared in the disciples' community of prayer and watched with them for the coming of the Holy Spirit at the great feast of Pentecost Day.

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CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEMBERS

Education

(Faith

Formation):

Debbie Streicher

Evangelism

Jane Roderick

Finance:

Suzanne Umstott

Ministry in Daily Life:

Nancy Ayers

Property:

Edward Ayers

Social Ministry (Fellowship):

Cindy Read

Stewardship:

Vacant

Worship and Music:

Kathleen Ball

Youth:

Gary Miller

THE REVEREND
RYAN K. VIANDS
Pastor

DAVID RANKIN
Director of Music

DEBBIE SZYMANSKI
Parish Assistant

STEPHANIE WADE
Treasurer

RAMON ROCHE CARDONA
Sexton

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It is only after we have accepted the forgiveness of the righteous Son of God that we can, at last, understand the closeness of God as comforting. Only then can we recognize God's great expectations as opportunity and possibility. The role of the saints and the reason we remember them with great honor is to drive us again to the cross of Jesus and to recognize that all our living comes from His dying. When we at last realize, through the gift of the Holy Spirit of baptism, that we have already died with Christ and will at the last rise with them, then it becomes possible for us to join with Blessed Mary and the grand and glorious chorus of all thy saints who sing without ceasing, Yes. Yes. Yes. To the Lord God Almighty!

***“Let it be done according
to thy word/will.”***

In His Service, Pax, Fr. Ryan +

Hospital Visitation Notice:

Due to ongoing COVID-19 regulations and U.P.M.C. bylaws, Fr. Ryan cannot (by word of mouth) make visits to parishioners of Saint Paul Church or on behalf of any other church make any unannounced visits to the local hospital without the first written permission of the said patient/parishioner. Fr. Ryan's name must be submitted in writing on the patient's admittance request form or by verbal agreement with a family member or legal guardian before he is allowed to attend to the spiritual needs of that parishioner/patient. So, if you are ever in need of Fr. Ryan's assistance of a pastoral or sacramental nature, please let the chaplain or nurse know that you need your parish pastor to make an immediate visit. If you have any questions about pastoral care when in the hospital, please talk with Fr. Ryan directly.

Thank You

From the Council President.....

On June 4th and 5th, Pastor Ryan, Kathleen Ball/Council Vice President and I attended the 2021 Delaware-Maryland Synod Assembly via Zoom. We had the opportunity to hear from officers and Mission Teams who provided reports and updates on the important work being done by the Synod. One example was the community garden initiative to help feed the hungry in our communities with healthy, fresh food from local gardens. We also celebrated significant anniversaries in 2020 and 2021, and we elected members for Synod Council, Discipline Committee, Consultation Committee, and voting members for the 2022 Church wide Assembly.

While I was not able to attend the annual church picnic, I heard from others that it was a huge success thanks to all of the hard work done by Cindy Read, Social Ministry/Fellowship and everyone else who helped and participated. Our appreciation also goes out to Ed Ayers/Property for the maintenance and repairs of the building including the front steps of the church and Debbie Streicher and the Faith Formation team for another great Vacation Bible School.

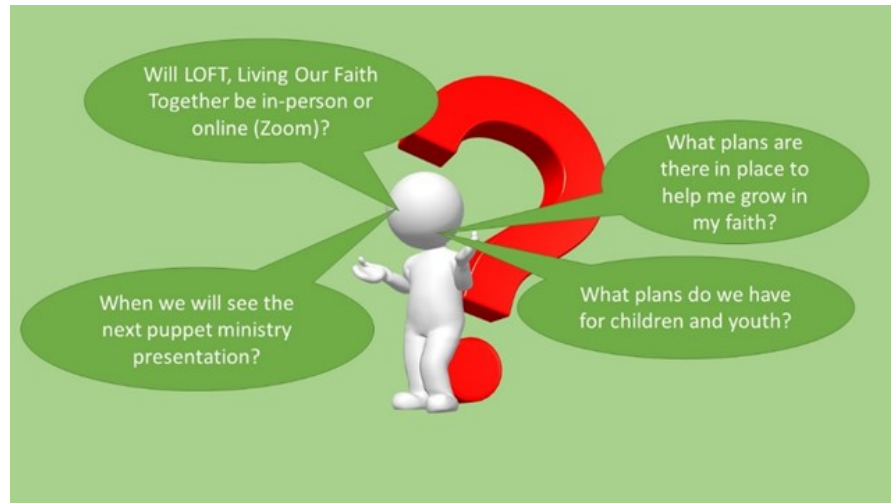
As you can see, we have had a very busy summer so far. Many thanks to the committee members and church staff.

The council will meet again on August 10th.

I hope everyone is having a wonderful and safe summer.

Blessings
Sue Umstott, Council President

Faith Formation for the Fall (Christian Education)



Due to the most recent concerns about new variants of the virus, our planned schedule for the fall will be revisited. **The Faith Formation Team will meet on Wednesday, August 18 at 7:00pm via a Zoom conference meeting.** Topics discussed will be: LOFT for the fall, resources for children, youth and families for worship, a new Chapel Time for children and youth, a parents/grandparents meeting, and more. If you are interested in joining the team and/or attending the meeting, please contact Debbie Streicher (703-303-7255). Decisions made for September will be shared on the website, Facebook page, September newsletter, and the weekly bulletin.

The Luther League Puppet Ministry Team



Many thanks to Emily, Erica, Rick, and Debbie Metheny, Katie and Tammy Rankin, and Burt and Debbie Streicher for their help during Vacation Bible School.

There were skits recorded, songs choreographed, scripture readings, and a live presentation for the closing. Lots of hours of work ended in very creative, thoughtful, and meaningful ways to share the Gospel with children and families.

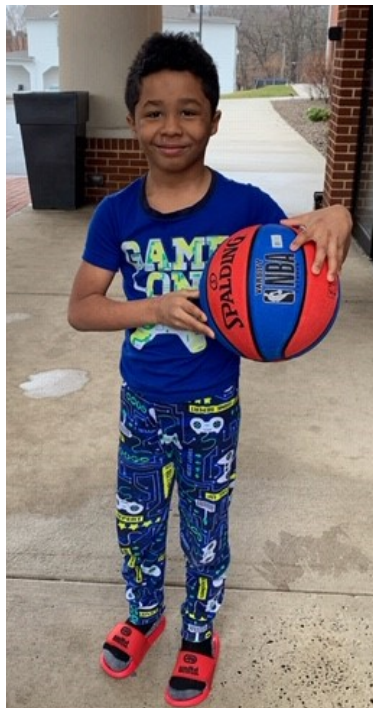
Stay tuned for future plans!



APPS Wrap-Up

We finished our drive-thru APPS in May. We served about 20 families each month, handing out boxes filled with perishable and non-perishable food, paper products, hygiene items, some Papa John's pizza coupons and, of course, goodies for the children. Each box also included "take-home APPS", to allow the families to have APPS at home. Every month the "take-home APPS" packet included a Circle Time handout with a Bible Story (Circle Time is normally how we start each Wednesday. It is a time to gather and introduce the Bible story and go over that Wednesday's schedule.) and a craft or project, which was created by the Middle/High School helpers. Here's what we did for the last few months:

March – We celebrated March Madness. Basketball is a big part of APPS. We play "knock-out" most Wednesdays. Through a generous donation by one of our staff, we gave each child a basketball, and they had a chance to make a shot from their car. It was a lot of fun!



April - We gave each child a kit to plant a flower garden at their home. The Middle School helpers painted stones to add to each child's flower garden.



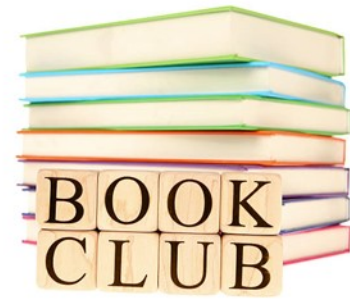
May - The helpers made a summer to do list, with fun things for each child to do over the summer.

The list even had pictures for the younger kids to follow. We provided sidewalk chalk, bubbles, and other fun toys to start them on their way to some summer fun.

Although we would have preferred having "normal APPS" this past year, the drive-thru allowed us to get to know the whole family of each child. We had a chance to talk with the adults, something we rarely have time to do. Usually we only see the parents at pick-up time and that does not allow us to speak with each one individually. I feel that we now know our APPS families much better, and that's our pandemic silver lining!

Stephanie Wade

APPS After-School Program
Volunteers Needed!



APPS stands for A Place People Share...

we share our time and talents each week with school children from West Side Elementary School. Each Wednesday during the school year, from 3:30 to 6:00, we spend time playing, learning, and eating together. We are looking for some volunteers to work with the APPS children. For the past 8 years, the same three wonderful ladies have worked with me at the APPS program (Christine Miller, Jeanne Bowers, and Sue George), with the help of Middle and High School helpers. One of our fantastic foursome is moving, and we really need some adult volunteers to fill the void this fall. New volunteers would be working alongside one of the seasoned veterans with a group of elementary school children. We divide the children into age groups and these groups, of about 10 children, become like a little family. They read the Bible story, do homework and crafts, play, and eat dinner together.

If you would like to volunteer or find out more about the program, we will be having an informational meeting on Wednesday, September 1, 2021 at 5:00 in Fellowship Hall. If you can't make the meeting, please feel free to call me (240-522-2645) for information about the program or to volunteer. You can volunteer every week or once a month. The amount of time is up to you. Personally, it is the most fun I have all week, and I hope you'll join us!

Stephanie Wade

The Joy Book Club has chosen *The Vanishing Half* by Brit Bennett as its next book for discussion, hopefully by the end of August. If you love to read, please consider joining the group for discussion and fellowship.



The Vanishing Half considers the lasting influence of the past as it shapes a person's decisions, desires and expectations while exploring some of the multiple reasons and realms in which people sometimes feel pulled to live as something other than their origins.

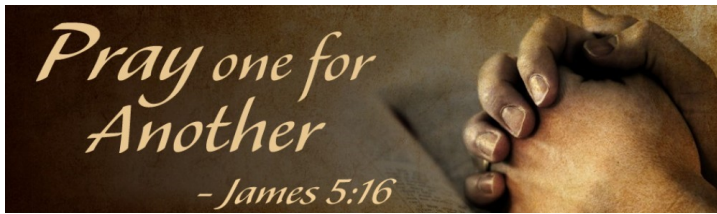
Joint Vacation Bible School 2021



The theme this year was *Treasured, Discovering You're Priceless to God*. There were 45 children registered from the following congregations: St. Paul's Lutheran in Cumberland, St. Luke's Lutheran in Cumberland, Souls Won Outreach Cathedral, First Presbyterian in Cumberland, Metropolitan AME, Ministry of Encouragement, Trinity Lutheran in Keyser, and Mt. Calvary Lutheran in Westernport. Children and families participated on a private Facebook group page for two weeks from June 14 to the 25th.

There was an in-person closing in Fellowship Hall (using masks and social distancing) with puppets, songs, treasure boxes, and an ice cream treat.

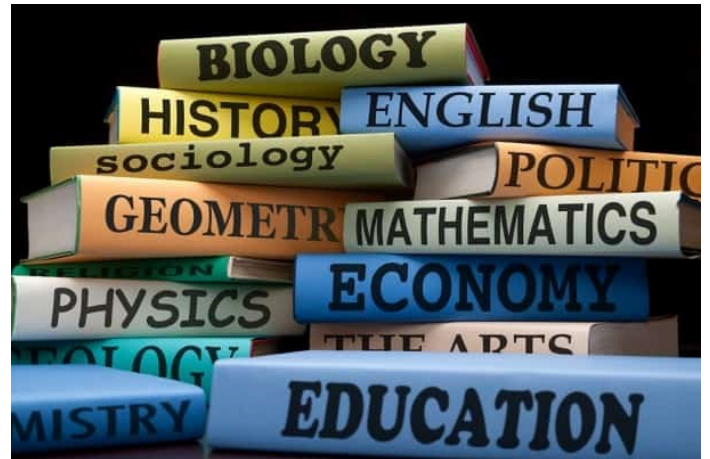




Prayer – God’s incredible gift. When we are given a gift, the first thing we have to do is open it. We open this gift of God with joy and privilege – His gift to us, the Creator of the world, wants us in relationship with Him! Prayer changes things, but even more prayer changes us as we become more engaged with what God is doing.

The St. Paul Prayer Team is actively engaged in daily prayer for the needs presented to us, and we have witnessed God’s grace and mercy as we have claimed His promise to hear us. Please let us know your need for prayer: by email at mutmab43@gmail.com, or by text or phone 240-727-1798.

Kathleen Ball,
Prayer Team Coordinator



Congratulations to
Daniel Highland!

Daniel is the recipient of the Mortimer C. and Elizabeth Ann Schaidt Tuition Scholarship. Daniel was awarded \$1,985.00 as he furthers his education at Allegany College of Maryland.

Daniel was also awarded the Bowersox scholarship in the amount of \$870.00 and the Frick scholarship in the amount of \$1,045.00. Please join us in
praying for
Daniel’s bright future.

Annual Church Picnic Lakewood Beach Pavilion





Thank You

Dear Congregation of St Paul's,
Thank you so much for the very nice graduation card and gift. I appreciate your thoughtfulness. Thank you for being with me in every step of my journey from birth to graduating. I am very eager to continue my education at Allegany College of Maryland in Multimedia Technology.
Thank you again.

Sincerely,
Daniel Highland

keep in touch

Joy Zembower is currently staying with her daughter in Michigan and would love to hear from her St. Paul's family.

Her address and phone number are:

Joy Zembower
c/o Darcy West
155 Lodewyck St.
Mt. Clemens, MI 48403

586-243-2430

Sunday 10:00 AM	August 1 Worship
Thursday 6:15 PM	August 5 Worship and Music Committee Meeting
Friday Beginnings Summer Programs End	August 6
Sunday 10:00 AM	August 8 Worship
Tuesday 5:30 PM	August 10 Church Council Meeting
Thursday 4:00-5:00	August 12 Drive-thru Bountiful Blessings
Sunday 10:00 AM	August 15 Worship
Sunday 10:00 AM	August 22 Worship
Thursday 4:00-5:00	August 26 Drive-thru Bountiful Blessings
Sunday 10:00 AM	August 29 Worship



Happy Birthday!!

August - 5 – Terry Hostetler
8 – Joy Zembower
11 – John Beegle
22 – Rena Christopher

From the Office of the Bishop - June 23, 2021

Updated Advice for Returning to In-gatherings in the DE-MD Synod, ELCA

“The promise of returning to in-person gatherings brings with it *the joyful anticipation of coming back together in beloved church buildings and the sober duty* of being prepared to do so safely.”

A Weekly Message from Bishop Gohl to the DE-MD Synod of the ELCA - August 4, 2021

Adapted for St. Paul, Cumberland –

I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. –

Ephesians 4.1-3

Covid and Covid Delta Variant numbers are rising, which elicits questions for us all about our responsibility as a community going forward.

I beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called- Our urgency is to love God and our neighbor. Life is not “normal” right now and adjustments have to be made in gathering to protect each of us and our neighbors and community.

Bearing with one another in love. Congregations in other places and contexts may make decisions we like better than ours, but we need to support our pastor and lay leaders who are making the best decisions with and for our community, with the information they have for our area.

Making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit. We developed Ministry Guidelines and have been unified in maintaining those original guidelines, making few adjustments, so that we would not have to retract any if conditions changed.

In the bond of peace. Our peace and promise is Jesus, and we pray that when we do come through this pandemic season, we will have stories and testimony to tell of how we recognized God’s love in Jesus Christ through one another’s words and deeds.

