

PROCLAIMING A TIMELESS CHRIST IN A CHANGING WORLD



THE SPIRE

SAINT PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH ✝ CUMBERLAND, MARYLAND

2019 CONGREGATION OFFICERS

President:

Dr. Burton Streicher

Vice President:

Kathleen Ball

Secretary:

Debbie Szymanski

Treasurer:

Stephanie Wade

2019 CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEMBERS

Education (Faith Formation):

Debbie Metheny

Evangelism:

Jane Roderick

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:

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December 2019

Dear friends in Christ,

Shalom – God's peace be with you.

We bid farewell and Godspeed to Fran Whitman, who departed this world into God's eternal realm on November 22, and we offer a happy welcome to Emily Grace, daughter of Caitlin and David, born into this world on November 20.

Now we carry in our hearts (*and our sated bellies!*) our gratitude and thanks-giving for God's providence as we pass into the blue season of Advent, to await the brilliant white light, little noted at its moment, of another child who came into the world: a brown child born in Palestine named Jesus, who will come to be seen as God our Savior in human form – Emmanuel, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace... the Word become flesh, come to dwell among us.

In his first sermon at his home town synagogue, Jesus will read Isaiah's words:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

He will test us about whom we see as our neighbor; he will challenge us to love our enemies, to turn the other cheek, to go the extra mile, to forgive and keep on forgiving. He will assure us not to worry about our worldly needs, but to strive first for the kingdom of God. He will invite us to come to Him when we are weary and heavily burdened, and he will give us rest for our souls. At his last meal with his disciples he will command that we love one another as he loves us.

This infant of Bethlehem will grow up to embody both the bold truth about our Maker and ourselves, and the infinite love of God, and he will give his life for us.

Again, *Shalom* – may you and your loved ones be in peace and harmony, and may you find wellness and joy during these seasons of Advent and Christmas.

Pastor Steve

STEVE HAPTONSTAHL
Interim Pastor

DAVID RANKIN
Director of Music

DEBBIE SZYMANSKI
Parish Assistant

STEPHANIE WADE
Treasurer

RAMON ROCHE CARDONA
Sexton

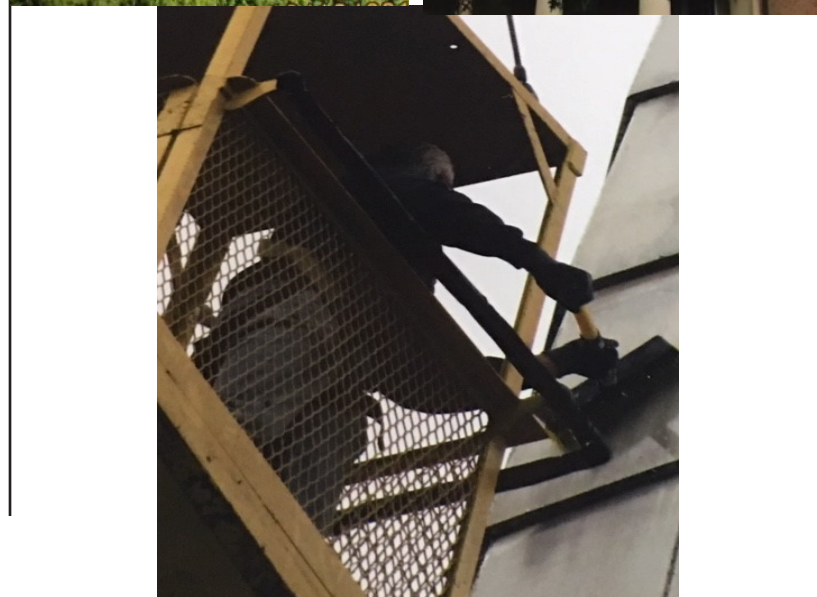
A Word from the President

The council met on November 12 and discussed many items as we prepared for the end of this fiscal year and planning for our annual congregational meeting in January. Our call committee is moving forward and interviewing another candidate for pastor at this time. I believe we are coming to the final stages in our search for a pastor.

The repair and painting of the church exterior as well as the steeple and base has made a great improvement in the appearance of the church building. This repair work was necessary in order to protect the wood surfaces from further deterioration and to maintain the integrity of our facility for many years into the future.

As we enter into the beginning of the new church year cycle with the celebration of the first Sunday in Advent this month, let us be thankful that we have maintained our momentum and quality of our congregation ministries during this pastoral transition period. I hope everyone will be able to feel the joy and blessings of this Advent season with their family and friends. Our church council will meet next on 10 December 2019.

(Burt Streicher, Council President)





The following poem was written by a friend for Fran Whitman. Fran, a long-time member of St. Paul's, had been a resident of Allegany Nursing and Rehab for several years and died on November 22nd. Fran loved to look out of her window and see the steeple of St. Paul's.

My Steeple

I look out my window everyday
And when I see it I start to pray
There against the backdrop of the sky
Is my church steeple standing so high.

As I stare at it up in the air
My eyes close and suddenly I'm there
All around there are people like me
Praying to God for eternity.

I hear the choir as it starts to sing
Just as my steeple bells stop their ring
The voice of the preacher sounds so clear
And I feel the Holy Ghost is here.

As time continues on in this place
It becomes full of amazing grace
I can feel the Lord's presence in me
And through him I am able to see.

Though I'm destined to be in this room
I am not destined for doom and gloom
This happens when I look out and see
My church steeple standing tall for me.



225th Tidbits: Open the Doors

There's a children's ditty – with hand gestures - that goes:

Here is the church
Here is the steeple

Open the doors to see all the people.

From the outside, St. Paul's may be the big building on the hill, but it is the people inside who really "make" St. Paul's. Over the past 225 years, thousands of people have come through those doors, each making some impact, small or large. Here are some of the impacts that people have today:

Hands are raised:

- To decorate bulletin boards or the sanctuary for holidays, or to change the hymn numbers in the sanctuary.
- Holding puppets as part of the Luther League puppet ministry, enhancing APPS and worship, sharing joy at local nursing homes and assisted living facilities.
- To carry the cross and light the candles during worship.

Voices are raised:

- In intercessory prayer, praying for others in their need.
- In song in the choir in its service leadership and anthems, and in the congregation, joining in worship.
- On Sundays to read lessons, lead prayers, and preach.
- In study, sharing and conversation as we Live Our Faith Together (LOFT).

Hands reach out:

- To shut ins through the Shepherd's Ministry, keeping them within the St. Paul's circle.
- To distribute personal and cleaning supplies to community members as part of Bountiful Blessings.
- To share St. Paul's doings in the media and in social media.
- To collect the offering, greet everyone before and after the service, and to prepare the altar and elements before and after worship.
- To share the Body and Blood.

Doors open:

- To welcome eight local congregations for a joint ecumenical Vacation Bible School every June.
- To various community groups, including weekly aerobics, Girl Scouts and the Mountainside Baroque early music ensemble for rehearsals, a summer music academy and performances.
- For Beginnings Montessori School.

Hands on instruments:

- Make music for worship, weddings and funerals, and just to fill our beautiful sanctuary with beautiful sound.
- Operate a sound system and a slide show to make worship more accessible.
- Keep our building clean, our grounds groomed and our pavements clear.
- Drive a van to provide transportation.

Hands craft:

- Food for APPS, funeral luncheons, Loaves & Fishes, and potluck dinners. They make cookies for shut-ins and meals for Bountiful Blessings.
- Prayer shawls and cancer bags.
- Renovations and repairs.
- The bread for communion.

Hands, voices and minds lead:

- Through church council and its committees – Education/Faith Formation, Evangelism, Finance, Ministry in Daily Life, Property, Social Ministry (Fellowship), Stewardship, Worship and Music, and Youth – to direct, manage, decide.
- Young people during the Children's Taking Faith Home message, during Children's Church and during APPS.
- As they prepare deposits and financial reports.
- In contemplation as they consider candidates to call for the next pastor.

Feet carry us:

- As we walk to raise money to fight cancer and hunger.
- As we walk together in faith.

Waiting

Just as Advent is a time of waiting, St. Paul's has been part of the waiting game as we search for a new pastor. One of the prayers in our prayer letter that we pray daily is:

“Please pray for the **Call Committee, Rick Metheny, Sabra Isom, Linda Zeller, Dennis Read, Caitlin Hudgins and Debbie Streicher**, as they continue to meet regularly and stay in contact with the Bishop's office.” The wait continues, but we faithfully persist in prayer, claiming God's promise to hear our prayers.

The challenge for the Call Committee is well defined., but what is the challenge for the whole? A few things come to mind: being faithful in attending services; being a person of prayer; being extra patient and understanding. Rather than leave the church, or say I'll wait until I see who the new pastor will be, we can take on more responsibility which helps contribute to unity, encouragement and support.

Change is a part of life, and as in our personal lives, changes require extra patience and flexibility by everyone. With God's help we can be stronger and healthier for it.

Let us pray that our hearts and minds will be open to consider the Call Committee recommendation, even though he or she may not fit all of our ideas of a good choice.

This is our faith community, and as we continue to be faithful, regardless of the changing nature of his church, we can grow in faith and love for each other.

“For I know the plans I have for you.” declares the Lord, “Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” Jeremiah 29:11

Kathleen Ball

Prayer Team Coordinator

The Luther League Puppet Ministry Team News



The puppet ministry team will do a Christmas presentation for APPS children, youth, and families on December 18th. The team is excited about introducing black light puppetry for this presentation. The Christmas story will be told, Christmas hymns sung, and a special puppet rendition of Silent Night will be presented. A new stage has been acquired and a few new puppets will make their debut.

They are also making plans to join with the Shepherd Team for visits to local senior residences to do caroling. If you are interested in learning more about the team, please contact Debbie Streicher: dstreicher52@gmail.com or 703-303-7255.



We will continue our tradition of decorating the sanctuary with poinsettias this year. Orders will be taken through Friday, December 13th. Each poinsettia is \$6.00. Please call the church office to place your order or put it in the offering plate and advise us how you wish to have your poinsettia designated in the Christmas Eve bulletin.



**Happy Birthday, Sharon Clark !!
December 25th**



St. Paul's Brass of Carlisle, PA will join us for a service of Lessons and Carols on Sunday, December 15th at 10:00 a.m.

Invite friends and neighbors to this festive service!



Sunday, December 22 5pm
Emmanuel Episcopal Parish

16 Washington Street, Cumberland

In this traditional holiday performance, The Scholars of St. Cecilia, Mountainside Baroque's resident chamber choir, will sing the annual Festival of Lessons & Carols for Christmas. (The program is free and open to the public, though a free-will offering will be received.)

Thank You

To the congregation of St. Paul's,
on behalf of the Potomac Concert Band,
I would like to say thank you so much for
the use of your beautiful church. It's
beginning to feel like our second home
in the summer.

We greatly appreciate your generosity
and support. Enclosed is a token of that
appreciation for whatever ministry you
choose.

In peace,

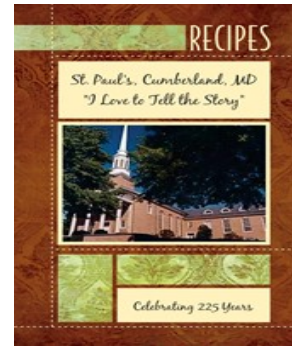
Jakki Rogers

Potomac Concert Band treasurer

****a check for \$350 was enclosed****



Cancer Bag Ministry - A reminder that we
have handmade tote bags that we fill with
various items to ease the waiting time during
chemo treatments. Bags include a handmade
prayer shawl, snacks, puzzle books, tissues,
etc., or you can just request a prayer shawl.
These bags are available to anyone you know
having been diagnosed with cancer or going
through treatment. Please call the office if you
know of a need.



Looking for an idea for that last-minute
Christmas gift? A St. Paul's anniversary
cookbook, "I Love to Tell the Story", along
with a sample of a recipe or two, would be a
welcome gift! Add a commemorative coffee
mug too!! Cookbooks and mugs are \$10.00
each. If you know of some long-time members
who are no longer local residents, the cookbook
has several pages of the history of life at St.
Paul's through the years. Both are available in
the church office during the week and on
Sundays before and after the worship service.



LOFT
Living Our Faith Together



Join us on Sunday mornings during Advent following worship and the Loaves and Fishes fellowship time. We begin at 11:45 and finish at 12:30. LOFT is an opportunity to meet with friends, learn, and grow in the Christian faith together. We begin with Mountain Highs and Valley Lows for the week. The adults then delve into more Bible readings based on Sunday's scripture readings as they focus on the theme for the week. Children gather to learn more about the lessons through age appropriate activities. All are welcome to join us for one or all Sundays each month.

LOFT Potlucks
Third Sunday of the Month Potluck Dinners
Christmas Tree Blessing Milestone



Every third Sunday of the month, St. Paul's invites you to join us for a potluck dinner in Fellowship Hall. Each month we recognize a different milestone in the life of the congregation and ones happening in our own lives.

*Please bring one dish to share.
There is a sign-up list on the bulletin board in the hallway.*

This month on **Sunday, December 15th at 5:00 pm**, we will share thoughts about the custom of the Christmas tree. It was introduced in Germany in the 16th century. Legend tells that the evergreen was chosen and decorated with candles to represent God's creation and the gift of God's Son as the Light of the World. This tradition is continued today as we use evergreen trees, strings of lights, and ornaments to decorate the tree in our homes. Each household will receive a Chrismon (a traditional Lutheran ornament) to place on their tree at home. Many thanks to Kathleen Ball and her team of elves for making the Chrismons for us and for the tree in the Sanctuary. Want to learn more about Chrismons and their meaning? Sign up and join us!



Sunday

December 1

First Sunday of Advent

10:00 AM Worship Service
11:15 AM Loaves and Fishes fellowship
11:45-12:30 LOFT

5:00 PM **Beginnings Board Meeting**

Monday

December 2

Beginnings Closed

9:30 AM Heavenly Bodies aerobics
5:00 PM Luther League Puppet practice

Tuesday

December 3

Beginnings Closed

Wednesday

December 4

9:30 AM Heavenly Bodies aerobics
3:30-6:00 APPS afterschool program
7:30 PM Sanctuary Choir rehearsal

Thursday

December 5

9:00 AM Ramblers-Altoona shopping trip

Friday

December 6

6-9 PM **Beginnings Parents Night Out**

Sunday

December 8

Second Sunday of Advent

10:00 AM Worship Service
11:15 AM Loaves and Fishes fellowship
11:45-12:30 LOFT

Monday

December 9

9:30 AM Heavenly Bodies aerobics
5:00 PM Luther League Puppet practice

Tuesday

December 10

Beginnings Santa shop

4:00 PM Church Council meeting

Wednesday

December 11

Beginnings Santa shop

9:30 AM Heavenly Bodies aerobics
3:30-6:00 APPS afterschool program
7:30 PM Sanctuary Choir rehearsal

Thursday

December 12

Beginnings Santa shop

4:00-6:00

Bountiful Blessings

Friday

December 13

Poinsettia orders due

Saturday

December 14

2:00 PM

Broadwater birthday party

Sunday

December 15

Third Sunday of Advent

10:00 AM

Lessons and Carols Service with St. Paul's Brass

11:15 AM

Loaves and Fishes fellowship

11:45-12:30

LOFT

5:00 PM

LOFT potluck

Monday

December 16

9:30 AM

Heavenly Bodies aerobics

5:00 PM

Luther League Puppet practice

Wednesday

December 18

9:30 AM

Heavenly Bodies aerobics

3:30-6:00

APPS afterschool program-

Family Christmas Dinner and Puppet presentation

7:30 PM

Sanctuary Choir rehearsal

Thursday

December 19

6:00 PM

Beginnings Winter Program

Sunday

December 22

Fourth Sunday of Advent

10:00 AM

Worship Service

11:15 AM

Loaves and Fishes fellowship

11:45-12:30

LOFT

Tuesday

December 24

7:00 PM

Christmas Eve service

Sunday

December 29

10:00 AM

Worship Service

11:15 AM

Loaves and Fishes fellowship

11:45-12:30

LOFT



Tuesday, December 24th at 7:00 p.m.

	December 1	December 8	December 15	December 22	December 24 7:00 p.m.	December 29
Ushers	Terry Hostetler and Art Isom	Mark Seib and Bob Davis	Terry Hostetler and Art Isom	Mark Seib and Bob Davis	Terry Hostetler and Art Isom	Mark Seib and Bob Davis
Crucifers	Harper Broadwater	Emily Metheny	Andrew Highland	Erica Metheny	Mia Broadwater	
Greeters	Ed Ayers and Deana Emerick	Mary Ann Hiester and Nancy Lohr	Roy and Jean Lee	John and Sylvia Hixon	Dave and Rena Christopher	Dennis and Cindy Read
Lectors	Ray Hunt	Liz Medcalf	Lessons and Carols with St. Paul's Brass	Tamela Rankin	Rick Metheny	Ray Hunt
Communion Assistants	Jim and Patti Squires	Gary Miller and Debbie Streicher	Emily and Erica Metheny	Brenda Marvin and Diane Rhoads	Jim and Patti Squires	
Children's Church	Rena Christopher	Christine Miller	No Children's Church	Debbie Metheny		No Children's Church
Loaves and Fishes Fellowship	Kathleen Ball and Debbie Szymanski	Metheny Family		Deana Emerick		
Technicians	Ed Ayers and Debbie Szymanski	Andrew and Daniel Highland and Debbie Szymanski	Jim Squires and Debbie Szymanski	Rick Metheny	Dave Hartman and Debbie Szymanski	Jim Squires and Debbie Szymanski
Counters	Debbie Szymanski and Stephanie Wade	Bob Davis and Terry Hostetler	Cecil Bell and Burt Streicher	Debbie Szymanski and Stephanie Wade		Burt Streicher and Debbie Szymanski