

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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December 2021

Pastor's Ponderings

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

BORN FOR YOU

To frightened shepherds on the edge of town, an angel makes a startling announcement: To you is born a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. One who saves. Saves us from what? In the gentle glow of our Christmass celebrations, we might pause for a moment to ponder this very important question. Jesus came to destroy the power of sin and death that accompanies once our separation from God.

"To you this day is born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." This announcement is made not just to the shepherds in the field two thousand years ago, but to all who hear these words in faith. This word is a plural "you". Like how I say a plural "you" "all ya'll". This good news is for all ya'll people: for all of God's favored children of every time and place. It is for all of you gathered in a living room like your homes or in the sanctuary and nave of the church, to hear again the mighty Christmass story. It is for all who marvel in astonishment, who laugh and rejoice that Christ is born in their hearts and in their lives over and over again. It is for all of those who have not yet heard the life giving story, but whose lives cry out for a strand of hope, a word of healing, a promise of care and peace.

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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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To you is born a mighty Savior. This is also a singular “you” Jesus comes to save each one of us, each unique individual that He has crafted and calls us by name. To you is born a mighty Savior. You reading these words. You the expectant parent. You the laid off employee. You the addict. You the one weighted down by doubt and shame. You the one wearied by loneliness. You the one giddy with joy and happiness. You the one driven by anxiety. You the chief of sinners. You the faithful believer. Jesus is born for YOU! Jesus came to die for YOU! We—all of us together and each one of us individually—need this mighty Savior, this Jesus, to save us from sin, everlasting death, and the devil and even from ourselves. His birth means new life for all ya’ll and me. That is why our song we sing for Christmass Eve and Day shall be, “Glory to God in the highest heavens and peace on earth to me and you.” Thanks be to God for His gift of eternal life!

Merry Christmaside
Dearest Children and Saints of God,
Fr. Ryan+



Nativity of Our Lord
Christmas Eve
Friday, December 24th
7:00 p.m.

Blue or Purple and rose for Advent?

That is the Question

*A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.*

- Prophet Isaiah 11:1

*He [John the Baptist] went into all the region around
the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for
the forgiveness of sins,*

- Saint Luke 3:3.

If you travel around to visit family this Advent season and worship together at their home congregation you might find that the decorations may be a different color. In some churches you may find vestments and paraments all adorned in a beautiful blue. In other places you may find deep and sober purple. Why do some Church's go blue during Advent while others are purple?

Historically, most churches have adorned themselves in purple during the Advent season as Purple is a color of repentance. Notice how purple also shows up during Lent when we are preparing for Easter, which is white/gold. This color purple prompts us to reflect, confess, and repent of our sins as we seek to prepare ourselves for the victory of God. However, Advent has often been seen as a sort of "mini-lent" as we seek to prepare ourselves for the birth of Emmanuel at Christmaside which like Easter is white/gold..

Blue has gained more recent popularity as a color of Advent, which seeks to promote the expectation that we feel as we await the presence of God in this world. The color blue prompts us to look ahead with eagerness and joy as something unprecedented and amazing is about to happen. In Advent we also have the rose (not pink) candle/ vestments/paraments that reminds us of the "halfway" mark of both the seasons of Advent and Lent. It is a little reprieve from the solemnness of each season. This halfway mark is also known as Gaudete Sunday meaning, "Rejoice" in Latin on the third Sunday during Advent, and Laetare meaning "Rejoice" in Latin on the fourth Sunday during Lent. Again, rose vestments and paraments can be used to observe this midway mark in both seasons.

In truth, both blue, purple, and rose lift up an important aspect of this season. We are eager to meet the God who made, loves and sustains us.

But we also want to tidy up the homes
of our hearts a bit too.

From the Council President.....

Christmas is a time of reflection and celebration. It's when Christians celebrate God's love for the world through the birth of the Christ child, Jesus. The message of Christmas is that where there is hope, love, light and life, the plan and purpose of God will reach.

"Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to all on whom his favor rests.'

Blessings and Merry Christmas to All!!

Sue Umstott, Council President

The Luther League Puppet Ministry Team Christmas Presentation



All ages are welcome to join us for the Christmas Under the Sea presentation and a special black light song by our puppet ministry team in Fellowship Hall on **Wednesday, December 15 at 5:30pm**. Come and see as we prepare for Jesus' birth through the telling of the Nativity story. Masks required.

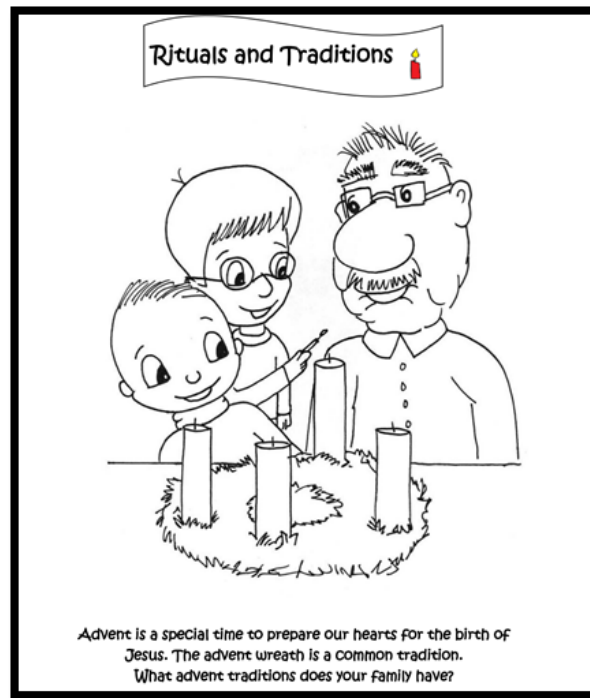


Family Faith Meal..... an APPS spin-off

Since we are unable to meet for APPS under the current COVID guidelines, we are offering drive-thru home cooked meals to the West Side Elementary School families. We thought it was a way to stay in touch with the school until we can start APPS again, plus we already had an awesome kitchen crew in place! We started in October with a spaghetti dinner and had 8 families drive-thru. In November we served 15 families turkey dinners, as well as handing out the "Giving Thanks" boxes filled by the congregation. The families were so surprised with the extra box of food and were very thankful! In December, there will be a puppet show for the families when they come to pick up their Christmas ham dinners. Thank you to the Puppet Ministry Team for what I know will be a fun Christmas show! Also thank you to the APPS Kitchen Crew for transitioning to this new APPS ministry. I certainly could not do it without them!

Merry Christmas!
Stephanie Wade

Faith Formation for Families with Children During Worship, Chapel and Craft Time, and the Home



Reminder! *Christ Cubby*, our center for worship resources for children and families is located in the rear of the nave. Worship bags for our children are full of resources to help them be engaged during our worship time.

Parents are invited to take the extra children's bulletins and coloring sheets each week found in the trays above the cubby to use during worship. Chapel and Craft Time takes place following worship each Sunday with Pastor Ryan and Kaitlin Diehl. Time is divided between the Chapel, on the lower level, and the Faith Formation Room, also on the lower level.

Parents are welcome to join their children during Chapel Time or join the LOFT Bible study taking place in Fellowship Hall.

Advent is a special time to tell the story of Jesus' coming when we gather on Sundays and in our homes during the week as we light an Advent candle.

If you have questions, please contact Debbie Streicher.
(dstreicher52@gmail.com or 703-303-7255)

LOFT

(Living Our Faith Together)

SCRIPTURE READING DISCUSSION:



- What words stay in your mind or what ideas do you have from this reading?
- What message do you hear for us in this reading?
- How does this reading influence your thoughts, feelings, or future actions?

RELATED READINGS FOR REVIEW AND HIGHLIGHTING:



Malachi 3:1-4	The promised messenger
Philippians 1:3-11	Peace to God's people
Psalms 126	Harvest of joy
Proverbs 24:13-14	Seek wisdom
Isaiah 40:1-11	A voice in the desert
Luke 1:68-79	Zechariah's prophesy

Prepare the way!

Join us as during Advent as we share the highs and lows in our lives, read scripture, and talk about the message we hear. We close with a prayer and a blessing. Bibles are provided but we also encourage you to bring a favorite study Bible if you have one.
Masks required at this time.

Advent on Washington Street

Advent Vespers at St. Paul Lutheran Church November 28th 6:00 p.m.
including scripture readings, prayers and a homily. Students from Frostburg State University, under the direction of Dr. Scott Rieker, will perform Bach's first cantata for Advent.

***Amahl and the Night Visitors* at Emmanuel Episcopal
December 12th 5:00 p.m.**

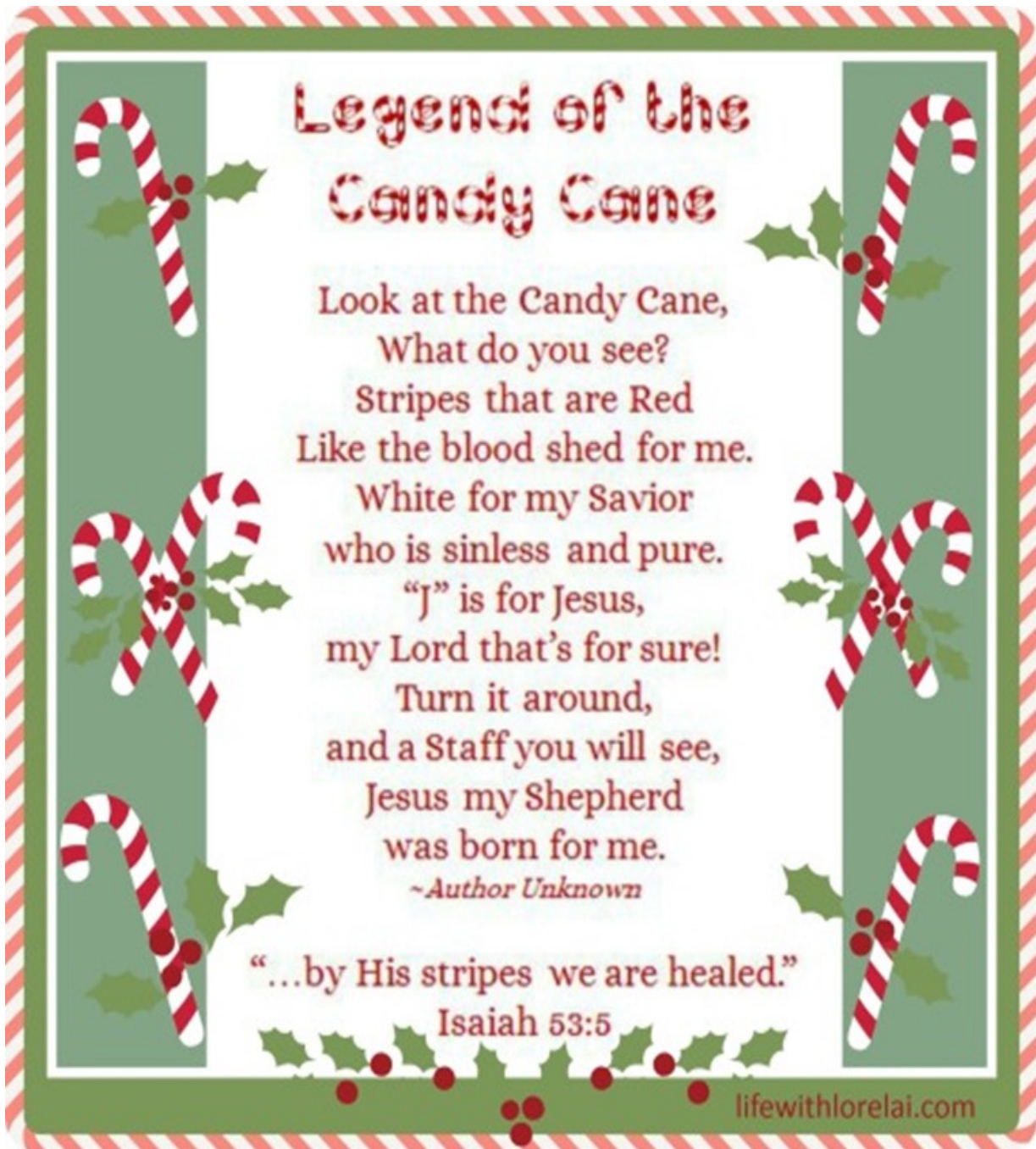
**An Evening of Holiday Cheer with Tenor David Cook December 17th
Emmanuel Episcopal 7:00 p.m.**

**Mountainside Baroque Lessons and Carols December 19th
Emmanuel Episcopal 5:00 p.m.**

Longest Night Service at First Presbyterian December 21st 7:00 p.m.

This legend, along with a candy cane, was given to each of our Bountiful Blessings recipients this month along with their regular distributions.

Thank you, Jane Roderick, for the idea!





The tradition of decorating the altar and chancel with poinsettias will continue this year.

Orders will be taken through Sunday, December 12th. The poinsettias will be ordered from a greenhouse in Pittsburgh and the cost for each plant is \$6.00.

Please call the church office to place your order or place it in the offering plate marked “poinsettia order” and advise us how you wish to have your floral offering designated in the bulletin.

Thank You

Dear St. Paul Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your donation of coats and accessories to the Safe and Snug program. Applications came in swiftly in anticipation of cold weather and your donations will ensure there are no cold children in our community. It is very much appreciated.

Paula Hogg
Department of Social Services



Our Bountiful Blessings team is in need of empty, clean ½ gallon-1 gallon juice or milk jugs with lids.

Please place items on the counters in the kitchen.

GIVE THANKS
by Giving



Thank you for participating in this project for the community. Our West Side Elementary School and Bountiful Blessing families were very grateful.



Wednesday

5:00 PM

5:45 PM

Friday

5:00 PM

6:00-9:00

Saturday

4:00 PM

Sunday

8:30 AM

10:00 AM

11:30 AM

Wednesday

4:30 PM

Thursday

4:00-5:00

6:15 PM

Saturday

2:00 PM

2:45 PM

Sunday

8:30 AM

10:00 AM

11:15 AM

Tuesday

5:30 PM

December 1

Hand bell rehearsal

Choir rehearsal

December 3

Sindy/Loar wedding rehearsal

Beginnings Parents Night Out

December 4

Sindy/Loar Wedding

December 5

Nouwen Book Study

Worship

LOFT and Children's Chapel

December 8

Luther League Puppet practice

December 9

Bountiful Blessings

Worship/Music Committee Mtg.

December 11

Hand bell rehearsal

Choir rehearsal

December 12

Nouwen book study

Worship

LOFT and Children's Chapel

December 14

Council Meeting

Wednesday

3:30-5:30

5:30 PM

Friday

6:00 PM

Saturday

3:00 PM

3:45 PM

Sunday

8:30 AM

10:00 AM

11:15 AM

Wednesday

11:15 AM

Friday

7:00 PM

Sunday

10:00 AM

11:15 AM

December 15

APPS drive-thru distribution

Christmas Under the

Sea Puppet presentation

December 17

Beginnings Winter Program

December 18

Hand bell rehearsal

Choir rehearsal

December 19

Nouwen Book Study

Worship

LOFT and Children's Chapel

December 22

Beginnings 1/2 Day

December 24

Christmas Eve Worship

December 26

Worship

LOFT and Children's Chapel



December

20 – Gregg Mazzone

25 – Sharon Clark

28 – Dave Christopher