

# PROCLAIMING A TIMELESS CHRIST IN A CHANGING WORLD

SINCE 1794



# THE SPIRE

SAINT PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH ✠ CUMBERLAND, MARYLAND

## 2022 CONGREGATION OFFICERS

### President:

Suzanne Umstott

### Vice President:

Kathleen Ball

### Secretary:

Debbie Szymanski

### Treasurer:

Stephanie Wade

## CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEMBERS

### Education

#### (Faith

#### Formation):

Debbie Streicher

### Evangelism

Jane Roderick

### Finance:

Suzanne Umstott

### Ministry in Daily Life:

Nancy Ayers

### Social Ministry (Fellowship):

Cindy Read

### Worship and Music:

Kathleen Ball

### Youth:

Gary Miller

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Email: [debbie@stpaulcumberland.org](mailto:debbie@stpaulcumberland.org)

December 2022



## *Pastor's Ponderings*

### **Are you willing to become a sign of vulnerability?**

The true miracle of Christmass is not that God comes to earth, but that God becomes the most vulnerable and dependent of creatures; a tiny baby who can only cry to make His needs known (sounds like us, doesn't it?). The mystery of Christmass is not that God is the maker of heaven and earth, but that God rules from the humble throne of a manger, among messy stalls and straw piles. "This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger" (St. Luke 2:22).

What draws us to this humble sign of a newborn child? Perhaps this very little innocent child is a reflection that exposes the weak and vulnerable we are afraid to admit or face ourselves. There is great pressure on adults and older children *not* to show any signs of weakness or making oneself look vulnerable. We work hard to appear in control, in full command on the job or among friend and family.

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THE REVEREND  
RYAN K. VIANDS  
Pastor

DAVID RANKIN  
Director of Music

DEBBIE SZYMANSKI  
Parish Administrator

STEPHANIE WADE  
Treasurer

RAMON ROCHE CARDONA  
Sexton

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When children look to us in times of uncertainty and fear, we as the adults try very hard not to revile that we too are possibly fearful or scared about the uncertainty of life's unpredictability. For when we look upon the face of a very tiny and fragile face like a baby we are confronted with a little being who has no control, we become aware of our own fragile lives, of pain or grief that we cannot manage.

But something deeper comes in this little sign of vulnerability. The birth of a baby and the awesome responsibility it brings is a *Kairos* ('the right, critical, or opportune moment'): a life altering gift from God that breaks into time itself and remakes the whole world. Jesus is God's supreme Kairos moment, breaking into our loves and bringing what we could not provide on our own: healing, forgiveness, reconciliation, peace, and a love that is deeper and stronger than any human love could ever go.

In this little innocent child that the whole world receives at Christmass, God becomes one of us in all ways, but sin. God becomes vulnerable just like you and me. God takes on our messy lives, so that we might live in a new way, a way we could not imagine by yourselves. On the most holy night of the year the Ruler of heaven and earth enters our lowly hearts and minds and bodies, our common, humble lives, our human flesh, and declares, "You will be a vulnerable sign of my presence, with a divine spark of love, peace and great joy.

Thanks be to God! Blessed Christmaside,

Fr. Ryan

## *From the president.....*

As we enter the holiday season please be mindful of some of the events going on here at St. Paul's. We are always looking for volunteers to assist with our many projects. We also have some council vacancies that we are looking to fill in the next month. If you feel called to help in these or any other areas, please reach out to me or Father Ryan.

"Christmas, my child, is love in action. Every time we love, every time we give, it's Christmas." - Dale Evans

Wishing everyone a very merry and blessed Christmas season.

Sue Umstott, Council President



Bishop William Gohl  
will preach and  
co-preside for worship at  
St. Paul Church on Sunday,  
December 11<sup>th</sup>.

## Living Our Faith Together



The Faith Formation Team has made the decision to include all ages under the umbrella of LOFT, an acronym for Living Our Faith Together.

LOFT takes place following worship every Sunday. LOFT for adults is a Bible study that takes place in Fellowship Hall. LOFT for youth meets with Pastor Ryan and Kaitlin Diehl on the lower level in a classroom where they engage in Bible stories and crafts.

All ages are invited to enjoy fellowship and a snack in Fellowship Hall before going to their groups. LOFT finishes at 12:45pm.

## The Joy Book Club



**The club is currently reading Mr. Churchill's Secretary and will meet for discussion on Monday, December 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. in fellowship hall.**



The PLACE spiritual gifts assessment was taken by 8 people in September and 5 more in November. PLACE helps you to learn who you are and about the gifts God has given you through learning about your personality, abilities, and passions and how they connect in your life. The next opportunity for PLACE will be in January.

Please contact Debbie Streicher ([dstreicher52@gmail.com](mailto:dstreicher52@gmail.com)) if you are interested as it will help with the dates to be chosen in January.

Our time together provides a wonderful opportunity to learn not only about ourselves, but get to know others as well.

## Keep in touch!

Dot and Diane Rhoads are currently staying with family members. They would love to hear from their St. Paul Church family.

c/o Linda Hafer  
129 Elatan Drive,  
Pittsburgh PA 15243

OR

c/o Carol Cyphers  
611 Vanadium Rd.  
Bridgeville PA 15017



The tradition of decorating the altar and chancel with poinsettias will continue this year. Orders will be taken through

**Sunday, December 11th.**

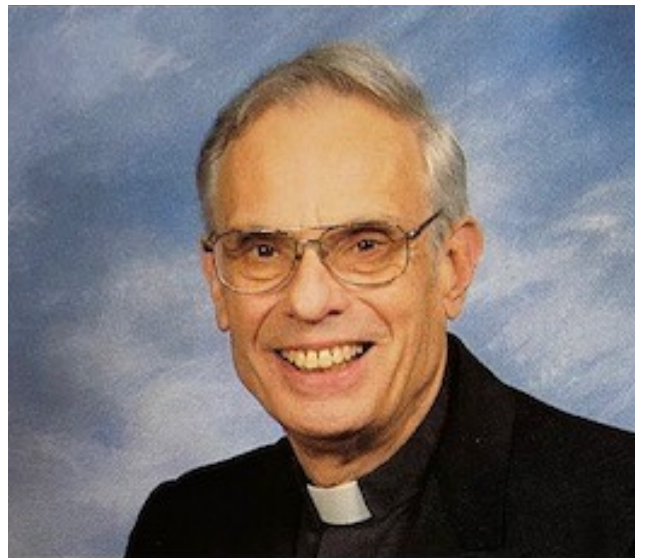
The poinsettias will be ordered from a greenhouse in Pittsburgh and the cost for each plant is \$7.00.

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. Be sure to let us know if you will be picking up your plant.

### *Bountiful Blessings*

### *Congregational Collection*

During the month of December we will be collecting aspirin, Tylenol, band-aids, rubbing alcohol, talcum powder and hydrogen peroxide. Please place items on the table located in the side narthex.



*The Reverend  
Donald F. Sause  
died on  
Tuesday,  
November 29th.  
His funeral will be  
held  
at St. Paul Church on  
Sunday,  
December 11th at  
2:00 p.m.*



thank  
you

Dear St. Paul's Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your donation of coats, scarves, gloves and hats to the Safe and Snug Program.

Applications are coming in swiftly in anticipation of cold weather. Your donations help ensure there are no cold children in our community and it is very much appreciated.

We provided 437 coats last year to school children who wouldn't have a coat if it wasn't for generous donations.

Thank you again for your ministry and your support of helping the children of

Allegany County stay warm this winter.

Sincerely,  
Paula Hogg  
Allegany County  
Department of Social Services



Soon it will be time for hanging of the greens, garland and setting up Christmas trees which is scheduled for Friday, December 16<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. **In order for this to be successful we need volunteers.** Please contact the church office

301-722-6604 or  
[debbie@stpaulcumberland.org](mailto:debbie@stpaulcumberland.org)  
if you're able to help.

## Lessons and Carols: Favorites Old and New

Sunday, December 18th, 2022

5:00 p.m.

Emmanuel Episcopal Church  
16 Washington Street

*Featuring the Scholars of St. Cecilia, Mountainside Baroque's resident chamber choir, the celebration encompasses six centuries of Christmas music, including traditional carols, along with readings by local clergy and officials. Mountainside Co-Artistic Directors Ryan Mullaney and Lyle Nordstrom lead The Scholars. This favorite holiday tradition is not a ticketed event, but donations will be welcomed!*

## Blue Night (The Longest Night)

First Presbyterian Church

11 Washington St.

Wednesday, December 21st

5:30 p.m.

Reflective worship of healing and hope for those coping with loss.



***The Holy Solemnity Mass for the  
Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ  
December 24th  
7:00 p.m.***

***Christmas Day Holy Mass for the  
Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ  
10:00 a.m.***



## Once Upon a Christmastime

*By Dona M. Maroney*

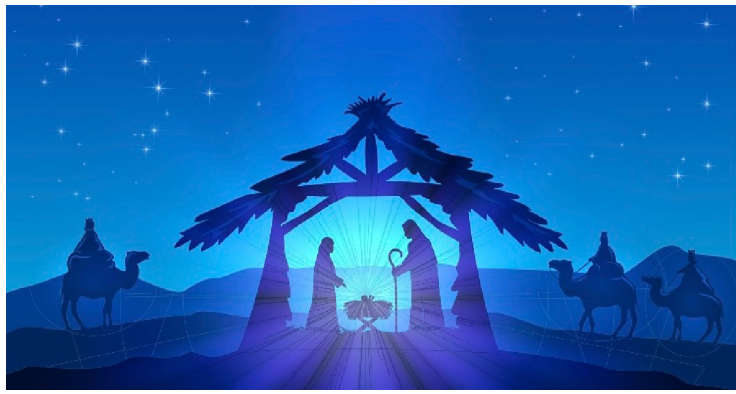
Once upon a Christmastime  
The angels sang with joy,  
To herald the coming  
Of a precious Baby Boy.  
Their shouting filled the heavens  
And shook the mighty Earth,  
And sent the shepherds searching  
For the place of His glorious birth.  
And when they found the manger  
And gazed upon His face,  
They knelt in adoration  
In that low and holy place.  
Oh, Father, fill me with the love  
That filled the Earth that night,  
A love that reaches throughout the world  
And fills it with Your light.



*Just for Kids (of all ages!)*



courtesy of <http://www.merrygames.com>



**Friday**  
6:00-9:00

**Saturday**  
10:00 AM

**Sunday**  
8:30 AM  
10:00 AM  
11:30 AM

**Monday-Friday December 5-9**  
Beginnings Santa Shop-conference room

**Wednesday**  
5:20 PM  
6:00 PM  
6:30 PM

**Thursday**  
4:00-6:00

**Sunday**  
8:30 AM  
10:00 AM  
11:30 AM  
2:00 PM

**Monday**  
6:00 PM

**Tuesday**  
5:30 PM  
6:30 PM

**Wednesday**  
5:20 PM  
6:00 PM  
6:30 PM

**December 2**  
Beginnings  
Parents Night Out

**December 3**  
Eastern Orthodox  
Community in chapel

**December 4**  
Book Study  
Worship  
Adult and Youth LOFT

**December 7**  
Bell rehearsal  
Vespers  
Choir rehearsal  
**December 8**  
Bountiful Blessings  
**December 11**  
Book Study  
Worship  
Adult and Youth LOFT  
The Reverend  
Donald Sause funeral

**December 12**  
Joy Book Club

**December 13**  
Council Meeting-conference room  
Beginnings paint night-fellowship hall

**December 14**  
Bell rehearsal  
Vespers  
Choir rehearsal

**Friday**  
5:00 PM  
6:00 PM

**Sunday**  
8:30 AM  
10:00 AM  
11:30 AM

**Monday**  
Bountiful Blessings Delivery

**Wednesday**  
5:30 PM

**Saturday**  
7:00 PM

**Sunday**  
10:00 AM

**Sunday**  
10:00 AM

**December 16**  
Hanging of the Greens  
Beginnings  
Winter Program

**December 18**  
Book Study  
Worship  
Adult and Youth LOFT

**December 19**  
Bountiful Blessings Delivery

**December 21**  
Blue Night Worship  
First Presbyterian

**December 24**  
Nativity of Our Lord  
Jesus Christ

**December 25**  
Christmas Day  
Holy Mass

**January 1**  
Worship



## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

20 – Gregg Mazzone  
25 – Sharon Clark  
28 – Dave Christopher