



Epistle July

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF SAINT PAUL'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

19 W. PENNSYLVANIA AVE., WALKERSVILLE, MARYLAND

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July 2024

SHARED MINISTRY

The Holy Spirit works in mysterious ways.

On June 18, 2023 the Congregations of Bethel Lutheran and St. Paul's Lutheran unanimously ratified the Covenant re-establishing shared ministry between the two congregations. Since July 9, 2023 worship has been 9:00am at St. Paul's and 11:15am at Bethel. The two congregations Pastor Phil has been leading are thriving and blending well. This renewed partnership has been a blessing for us all.

Lead with love and grace, we are stronger together.

WALKERSVILLE CARNIVAL

The Walkersville Volunteer Fire Company Carnival will be held this year from Monday, July 1st to Saturday, July 6th. In the past members of St. Paul's have been faithful in providing help to the Fire company for this event and that has been greatly appreciated. Again, this year the Fire Company is requesting the help of St. Paul's for this event. Help is needed in the Food Building and various other places on the grounds. If you can help, just show up any night and help for whatever time fits in your schedule. The hours of the Carnival are roughly from 5:00pm until 10:00pm. Feel free to come anytime and stay as long as you wish. Thanks again for your continued support.

“Luther would ask who benefits from our liberty. For Luther, the answer is our neighbors, not ourselves.”

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July Birthdays

- July 5th - Michael King
Barbara Sofinowski
- July 12th - Kathleen St. Denis
- July 13th - Nicklas Pank
- July 15th - Kelly Anderson
- July 19th - Artie Fauble
- July 20th - Jean Kelley
Lauren McCloskey
- July 23rd - Sue Snyder
- July 28th - Mary Ann Conley
Betty Schubert
- July 29th - Heather Anderson
- July 31st - Brian Smith
Zachary Zeller

Youth in our Church

By: Lauren McCloskey

My family joined the church in February of 1988. My father had just accepted the position of pastor of St. Paul's, and we moved from a small town in Pennsylvania to a small town in Maryland. Even though I cannot remember what the church was like when I was two years old, I can remember growing up in this church. I remember Sunday School, where each classroom had a teacher, and we were separated by age. Each year, we received a pin to mark our perfect attendance, and it was announced during the service. We had a substantial group of youth, and I remember going on trips to places such as Kings Dominion and Ocean City. We had lock-ins in the parish hall, caroling every December to the shut-ins, and Halloween parties (I still can't go into the parish hall basement because I'm too scared!). In middle school, we even had an afterschool youth program where the youth could hang out in the church's basement and bring their friends. The church was always a big part of my life, not just because my father was the minister and we literally lived next door, but because I was involved and wanted to be involved. Many of the youth of St. Paul's were involved in the church choir, Jesus Juveniles. We sang at our church and other churches, for charity events and church plays, and even went on tour. Growing up at St. Paul's was the best. However, our youth grew up, went off to college or their career, and most have not returned. This is the sad reality for the church these days, and it's not just happening at St. Paul's, it's happening to many churches, especially smaller ones.

So, what can we do? How do we get more youth into our church? We should not be looking at the number of youths but how we can bring them to a church that continues supporting them. Not only do I remember the number of youths we had, but I also remember the helpers and volunteers we had. We had leaders; however, we also had parents, friends, and other congregation members help every step of the way. I was not a part of the youth group when Belinda took the youth on mission trips, but I know that it could not have come to life without the members of our church. People gave the youth their time, money, prayers, and support, and we do not have to stop.



A couple of weeks ago, the church welcomed our youth for our first Youth Sunday, which comprised young children. Our oldest child was 11, and our youngest was three. They did a fantastic job, and I am so proud of every one of them. We produced such a service because of all the help I have received from many members of our congregation. We did it together. We succeeded together. We spread the word of God together. However, we are just getting started. We have a young youth program right now, but we are so blessed. We are blessed to share Christ's love with them so early in life that we can build up our youth program again. But we cannot do it alone. We need help. We need your help. It is going to take a church to raise our Youth.

Are you willing to take up the call?

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord"

Colossians 3:23

What Does it Mean to be Lutheran in a crucial election year?

Thanks to one of our members, the cost for these seminars have been paid. We will be airing these on the big screen in the overflow area in the church from 7-8:30pm on the appointed evenings. There will also be a link available if you are not able to make it and would like to watch it from home. This will be like a follow up of our Gathered at the Table Series. Please contact the office to let us know you will be attending and feel free to bring snacks and drinks.

- June 25:** Introduction to Social Teachings Dr. Roger Willer, Director of Theological Ethics for the ELCA
- August 27:** Corporate Social Responsibility Rev. Kaari Reiersen, Director of Corporate Social Responsibility for the ELCA
- Sept. 10:** Abortion Dr. Caryn Riswold, Professor of Religion/McCoy Family Distinguished Chair in Lutheran Heritage and Mission at Wartburg College
- Sept.:** Faith, Sexism and Justice Dr. Mary Streufert, Director, Gender Justice and Women's Empowerment, and Heather Dean, Program Coordinator, Theological Discernment, ELCA
- Oct. 8:** Earth's Climate Crisis Study Guide Dr. Ryan Cumming, Program Director, Theological Ethics, Education, and Community Engagement
- Oct. 22:** Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture Dr. Richard Perry, emeritus faculty, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago



**United
Lutheran
Seminary**

Kindling Faith
Learning Never Ends



"Use your freedom to serve one another in love"

Inspired by:
-Galatians 5:13 ESV

Dayspring.com

Back to School Outreach

St. Paul's has long supported the Back-to-School project, a program sponsored by Glade Valley Community Services. This is a community-wide effort to ensure that students start the school year off right with needed school supplies, as the cost of these supplies is prohibitive for some families. You may place your school supply donations in the box at the church through July 30th, when they will be delivered for distribution..

Be on the look out now to take advantage of summer sales and help local children get ready for school.



The following is a recommended list of requested items:

- Backpacks
- Safety scissors (don't forget the lefties!)
- Pencils (#2 made in USA)
- Pencil sharpeners
- Colored pencils
- Ballpoint Pens
- Highlighters
- Crayons (16 & 24 count)
- Dry erase markers (low odor)
- Zippered Pencil Pouches
- Loose Leaf Paper (wide & college ruled)
- Folders with brads (assorted colors)
- Composition notebooks (wide ruled)
- Glue sticks (fat & regular size)
- Index Cards
- 1" Notebook Binders
- Spiral notebooks (Single; multi-subject, wide and college ruled)

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord"

Colossians 3:23

"With Faith like Fireworks, we shine brightly, boldly, and freely."

*Inspired by
Matthew 5:14
Dayspring.com*



**"MINUTE TO WIN IT"
GAME DAY!
Victoria Park
Sunday, July 28th
1-3PM**

St. Paul's will be hosting a summer event for the residents of Victoria Park. We will be playing games and have scheduled the KONA truck for a summer treat. Please sign up to join us or to donate items needed using the link below. The residents are excited for us to come back and appreciate our continued support.

SAVE THE DATE!
Sunday, August 18, 2024,
10:30am at
Walkersville Community Park
and will include a blessing of
the backpacks!



**Woodsboro Evangelical Lutheran Church &
St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Walkersville
Are Proudly Sponsoring a "Free Community Dinner"**

ALL ARE WELCOME, Bring Family and Friends

Tuesday July 2nd & Saturday, July 20th

5:00PM to 7:00PM

**Woodsboro Evangelical Lutheran Church
101 S Main Street, Woodsboro, MD 21798**



COMMUNITY DINNER

Please contact Roxanne Smith if you would like to volunteer your time or desserts.
301-639-0900
Email: roxiesmith@verizon.net

Pastor's Peace

"²⁸There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." Galatians 3:28

This past February the Councils and ministry team leaders came together at MarLu Ridge for our annual Leadership Retreat. We were blessed to have Pastor Carla Christopher as our facilitator for the day. Pastor Carla serves as the Assistant to the Bishop for Justice Ministries. The focus of the presentation was to provide those in attendance a better understanding of the LGBTQIA+ community as there are many things that are confusing and things which many of us might not understand. I believe I am confident in saying that everyone who attended the retreat left with new knowledge and perhaps a better understanding of what it means to love our neighbor. Not that long after, I met up with Pastor Carla at a Frederick Conference Meeting where she was kind enough to share an experience she had at MarLu Ridge following our conversations at the leadership retreat.

Pastor Carla shared that when we had all left, the kitchen staff came out to greet her and shared their appreciation for the conversations that were had that day with our two councils and how pleased they were with what they termed as positive interactions in not only being willing to learn about this but to learn how to embrace others who may live on the fringes of society. Pastor Carla spent another two hours sharing life with these siblings in Christ to not only hear their stories, but to share with them the love of God we so greatly blessed to enjoy. Fast forward to June at Synod Assembly, and though not named specifically, Pastor Carla lifted up our two congregations as a model for what it is like to be willing to embrace those who are different from us and not to exclude anyone from our midst. Just knowing that together in Christ we have had a positive impact on the community and our Synod is pointing us in the right direction of simultaneously showing who we are as congregations and who we are as siblings in Christ.



Reconciling in Christ

Pastor's Peace cont'd

Your Council is working to put knowledge in our toolboxes and that is all. Much like we discussed in our Gathered at the Table Series, we are providing information so you can be better prepared to love your neighbor no matter who it is. It is OK to disagree, but I would encourage you to keep seeking answers, find truths, and be willing to learn new things. Inclusion is not limited to this group or that group, inclusion means finding those who are the least, lost, and the last by welcoming them into our community of faith so that no one is left behind. When we are accepting of those who we feel might be different from us in some way, we are doing what Christ reminds us in Matthew 25:36-40:

³⁶I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' ³⁷Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? ³⁸When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? ³⁹Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' ⁴⁰And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'

Peace IS with you!

Peace Pastor Phil

Email: pastor@saintpaulslutheranchurch.org

Cell phone: 202-497-0584

A Message from the Council President

Being part of the ELCA, which was requested by this congregation, we continue to learn from the ELCA statements what we, as Lutherans, believe. In our Council Leadership retreat we learned about loving our neighbor and learning about God's children in every form.

Pastor Carla from the Synod was our teacher to educate us all on the LGBTQ community. I would like to pass on to you what we learned during our council retreat.

We all know that parts of the Bible have been used against some of God's children. The translations of the Greek words were about doing acts to control, disrespect, and degrade people in that time. We are called to love all of God's children, just as our church says; through Christ, we joyfully feed the body, mind, and spirit of all.

I have included the slides to help us understand how these children of God feel about themselves.

Pastor Carla will be here July 14, 2024, to preach and to answers any questions you may have.

I ask that everyone prays for guidance and understanding.

Patty Rimel, Council President

WHAT DOES AUTHENTIC INVITATION AND INCLUSION LOOK LIKE IN FAITH COMMUNITY?



Use of Pronouns and Gender-inclusive Language in worship and faith formation, on forms and documents, during introductions and on nametags etc.



Uplifting the witness and wisdom of LGBTQIA2S+ theologians as speakers, authors, resource creators, community partners etc. year-round and with credit and/or fair compensation.



Normalizing images of, references to, or centering LGBTQIA2S+ individuals and families in artwork, social media, sermon & teaching examples, program curation.



Uplifting the safety and care for LGBTQIA2S+ members in congregational policy and procedure, building accessibility & continued congregational awareness raising, education & advocacy.



RESOURCES FOR CONTINUED LEARNING

ELCA Resources

- o ELCA LGBTQ Resource Page (<https://www.elca.org/lgbt>)
- o Reconciling Works
- o Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries
- o Queerfully & Wonderfully Made and other Welcoming & Affirming Books from Augsburg Fortress (<https://blog.augsburgfortress.org/celebrate-queer-stories-1>)

Community Resources

- o The Trevor Project (Youth)
- o SAGE (Seniors)
- o Human Rights Campaign
- o GLAAD (Media Representation)
- o PFLAG (Parents & Friends)
- o GLSEN (Students)

Faith-based Resources

- o The Queer Bible Commentary
- o Unclobber.com
- o Queering the Lectionary Project (<https://www.jimmyhoke.com/queerlectionary>)
- o QueerTheology.Com
- o Out in Scripture (a project of the HRC)
- o Enfleshed
- o WordMadeQueer.Com



Christ Inner Harbor Lutheran Church

On June 19, 2024 “An overnight explosion after a basement fire at a South Charles Street church Friday left 17 residents homeless, Baltimore City officials say.....The church housed a women’s shelter, and when the fire broke out, 17 residents had to be relocated, the Baltimore City Fire Department told The Baltimore Sun on Wednesday. Fire officials had no updates about the families. ” — The Baltimore Sun



We are collecting a special offering through the month of July to support our siblings in Christ as I am sure they would do for us.

For all those asking, "how can we help?"

Dear Christ Church family and friends,

By now you have heard that there was a major fire that caused significant damage. Our shelter staff did an excellent job of evacuating the residents, and no one was hurt. In the midst of such chaos, what a joy to see an incredible partnership of our ministries working together. The CCHA staff and residents hosted our shelter residents, providing coffee, breakfast, and lunch for everyone. This evening all of our residents have been moved to a hotel.

Over 100 firefighters, EMS, BGE, and police have worked together to stabilize the fire, extinguish it, and clean up the high level of Carbon Monoxide.

The fire destroyed the major electrical room, which means we do not have power in the building until it is rebuilt. The rest of the building was affected by smoke, and we don't yet know the full extent of the damage. The cause of the fire is still unknown.

In the meantime, our worship services will be online this Sunday.

Thank you for your notes, calls, texts, and messages. Thanks to all who have been working on this so we can get back to our normal schedule. Many of you and friends from around the country have reached out asking how you can help. You can help by donating to the building cleanup and rebuilding fund. With your generosity, we can rebuild the electrical infrastructure soon and continue our ministries.

As the word of the Prophet reminds us: *"When we pass through the waters, he will be with us; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm us; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume us."* - Isaiah 43:2

"We conclude, therefore, that a Christian lives not in himself, but in Christ and the neighbor. He lives in Christ through faith, and in his neighbor through love".

— Martin Luther

Quilting Ministry

Submitted by Kate Stottlemeyer

At Worship on Sunday, July 21, we will bless about 40 quilts.

Quilt Ministry, an offshoot of Congregational Life Ministry, is dedicated to making quilts for local charities. We specialize in quilts for children. These children, many displaced from home and some without a proper bed, have so little. They need a blanket to sleep under and something of their own to hold. These quilts provide warmth to the body and comfort to the soul, thereby fulfilling St. Paul's Mission Statement: Through Christ, we joyfully feed the body, mind and soul of all.

Historically, we have distributed quilts, mainly to four organizations:

1. **Sleep in Heavenly Peace**
(a.k.a. "No kid sleeps on the floor")
2. **Children of Incarcerated Parents**
3. **Heartly House**
4. **Faith House**

We would like to lengthen that list. If you know of any reasonably local (for pick-up/delivery) organizations--or families who might be down on their luck--that might be interested in children's quilts, please contact Kate Stottlemeyer or the Church Office. No child should go to sleep cold.

*"Just living is not enough"
said the butterfly "One must have
sunshine, freedom, and a little flower."
~ Hans Christian Anderson*

We thank you for your generous support and welcome your help in the future. **How can you help?**

1. Prayers--We can do nothing without God's blessing and aid.
2. Sewing--No cutting or designing required. All you need is a sewing machine and thread (any color(s)--It won't show). See Kate for details.
3. Knotting--It's easy! If you can tie your shoe, you can knot a quilt. Check the Bulletin for dates (usually monthly).
4. Donations of fabric (scraps are okay) and low-loft quilt batting. 5. Donations of cash for purchasing supplies (especially batting). Clearly label your donation "quilts".

At this time we are especially in need of cash donations.

We appreciate your continued support.



UPCOMING EVENTS

- ◆ 07/07/2024—Worship @ Bethel 11:15am, Ministry Sunday
- ◆ 07/01—7/06 2024— Walkersville Carnival
- ◆ 07/04/2023— Independence Day
- ◆ 07/20/2024—Free Community Dinner, 5:00pm
- ◆ 07/28/2024— "Minute to Win It" @ Victoria Park, 1pm-3pm

