



proclamation

DECEMBER- 2016

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NEWS FLASH! CHURCHES OPEN CHRISTMAS MORNING!!!

In what will come to be seen as a world shocking event, churches have been announcing all over the globe in localized press conferences that they will be open for worship as usual on Christmas morning.

This daring move has been has been confusing everyone everywhere.

“How dare they?” critics have been proclaiming incredulously. “Don’t the churches know that Christmas is about families?” Others have been worried about travel plans, the cooking of hams, and quality time to open presents.

One reporter was overheard asking, “But what about the children?!?”

Part of the reasoning that rippled through the press conferences was the idea that Christmas originated as ‘a remembrance of the birth of Jesus the Christ.’ In an opposing opinion, Lou C. Fer, however questioned whether Jesus even existed.

“But surely Jesus would rather everyone stay at home with their loved ones!” was just one of the opinions that spread through the press conference out into the streets. Some reporters wondered about the possibility of demonstrations. Almost immediately, commentators started questioning the wisdom in opening up Christmas morning. Surely people will have more important things to do than “go to church.”

Locally, St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Mechanicsville, Maryland was one of the churches going with this shocking trend. When calling the church to question the move, all church administrator Lorrie Ching had to offer was “no comment.”

The pastor of St. Paul’s Lutheran, the Rev. Timothy McNutt, offered the opinion that St. Paul’s was completely apologetic and understood that people had other things to do. When the pastor tried to remind reporters that at some point Christmas was originally a Christian event and should be open, the crowd of reporters laughed at him.

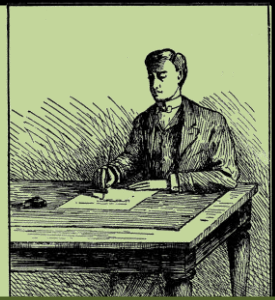
Off the record, however, the pastor told the local media outlets that “people should do whatever they felt was important in their own hearts.” He was also quick to quip that church should never interfere with peoples’ priorities.

In the end Pastor McNutt reminded everyone, “God just wants them to be happy.”

Further details revealed **St. Paul’s will be open for one service at 10:00am** with both preaching and Holy Communion as usual.

From the desk of the Congregational President

Paul Mehrkam



December 2016 President Letter

We are now in the season of Advent when we are constantly bombarded with images of Christmas trees, presents, and Santa Claus. I encourage everyone to take this opportunity to share in the fellowship of Jesus with family, friends, co-workers, etc. Opportunities include Wednesday Advent night services and a Christmas theme event every week leading up to Christmas Day.

You can even be like Santa Claus. Not the commercialize Santa version that tells us to go buy gifts from every store, but more like the Saint Nicholas of Myra who was a 4th-century Greek Christian bishop that was famous for giving gifts to the poor. Be sure to pick up a Christmas tree angel to brighten someone's Christmas.

Thanksgiving Day in November reminded us to give thanks to all, especially those who serve the Lord. Thank you for those that contributed, worked, and shared in fellowship for a successful 2106 Christmas Bazaar. Thank you to those that have contributed to the needs of the Eva Turner School and the Mission.

Dear Lord, please Instill in us a sense of Your good will and charity in helping out those in our community. May we not be caught up with desire for material items of this world, but be fill with Your love as we take care of our fellow neighbors in Southern Maryland. Amen.

**HUMBLE STEWARDS****By Kim Mozingo**

As stewards, we are the recipients and caretakers of God's goodness, love, mercy, and grace. Stewards are managers of God's creation. We acknowledge God as the owner; therefore, we are to act not as owners but as managers because our lives and resources are simply on loan from Him.

The book of Daniel gives an account of a man who failed to recognize God as Creator and provider, and exalted himself. King Nebuchadnezzar, walking the roof of 'his' royal palace, surveying 'his' kingdom, was overcome by pride as he announced, "Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?" (Daniel 4:30). He thought he was asking a rhetorical question, but God condemned him to live like an animal as a consequence of his pride.

Pride is destructive. It destroys gratitude to God for all His kindness to us. It destroys our desire and ability to serve others. It destroys contentment for it feeds our competitive nature so that we are not satisfied with just being wealthy or intelligent, but we want to be wealthier and more intelligent than anyone else. Recent research clearly shows how important gratitude is to living a healthy life; imagine, God already knew this but it has been revealed to us again through research (isn't it funny how man is constantly proving what God has already told us is in our best interest?)

Pride has no place in the life of a servant. First Peter 5:6 reads, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand that He may lift you up in due time." It is God alone who can exalt us (Psalm 75:7). If Christ himself, God's only begotten Son, humbled Himself, should we not follow His example and humble ourselves? Because Christ humbled Himself, God exalted Him (Philippians 2:9).

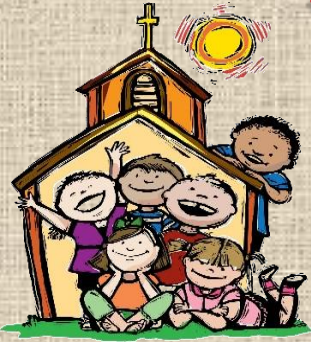
David, the shepherd-king, put our situation in proper perspective: "When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?" (Psalm 8:4). The inference is that we are insignificant, yet David goes on to remind us of what we can be proud: "You made [us] ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under [our] feet."

Humility allows us to accept our smallness and God's goodness. It also allows us to give up and let go of stress: about money, family, our jobs, even our health when we recognize that it is God's money, family, work, and health and that these are all things we can rightly put into His hands. In the words of Martin Luther, humility is the decision to "let God be God." We are stewards through humility. We are to honor him with what we have (what He has given), what we are (His sons and daughters), and what He will make of us (our futures).

So let go of pride, let go of stress. Let's humble ourselves and express our gratitude to God by being excellent stewards of our time, our talent, our treasures, our families, ourselves, and our community this Christmas season.

Kim Mozingo**Mobile: 240-416-0012**kimmozingo@yahoo.com

Sunday School News



The Little Children and Jesus – Matthew 19:13-15

The little children were brought to Jesus for Him to place His hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked those who brought them. Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Greetings from the Sunday school!

As the holiday season approaches our students and staff are gearing up for the celebration of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. We will be celebrating with our annual Christmas Program titled "Unto Us A Child Is Born," which will be performed by the children at the 10:30 worship service on **December 18, 2016**. We will also be having a practice for the Christmas program on **Saturday, December 10th** from 10:00 AM to 12 noon. This will give the children a chance to practice in the main church. We would like everyone to bring either some cookies or a bag of chips to share, as we will provide children with a pizza lunch from 12:00 to 12:30 PM.

After the service on the 18th, we would like to invite all our church families to join us for a pot luck lunch. For all who plan to stay for the fellowship, we ask that you bring a main dish and a side or dessert to share. We hope all will attend as this a great way to support our children's enthusiasm for the true meaning and importance of Christmas.

Lastly, throughout the month of December as we continue to focus on sharing God's love and our blessings with others, we are asking our Sunday school families to help us collect items for children in need at Eva Turner Elementary school in Waldorf. As St. Paul's congregation is sponsoring a food and winter clothing drive, we would like to have the Sunday school focus on the winter clothing part. For each Sunday, up until the program, children can bring in gently used or new hats, scarfs, mittens and/or coats for all ages and other winter clothing for 7 to 11 year olds. We will have a collection basket available during Sunday school openings for children to place their donated items. We will be collecting items until December 18th when we have the Christmas program.

Also, please note that there will be no Sunday school classes on Sunday, December 25th or January 1st. Classes will resume on Sunday, January 8th.

Melissa Chew, Sunday school directress

A VIEW FROM THE PEW – by Jim Shewbridge
SOME THOUGHTS ON SHARING THE GOOD NEWS---

THRED: A NEW ERA IN OUTREACH

Several weeks ago, I received a copy of the Lutheran Layman – a publication from Lutheran Hour Ministries. I was unaware that the Lutheran Hour programs were still in existence. Our family listened to the radio programs in the late 40s & early 50s and with the advent of television watched their “This is the Life” programs. It was part of our life in much simpler times. Keeping in mind our calling to witness for Christ, the group is launching a new effort in 2017 to reach out digitally to unchurched people.

The outreach involves tapping into the digital world of the Millennials, which pursues back and forth conversations online. The communications are referred to as discussion threads engaging two or more in dialogues which will relate to the message of Jesus. Their research shows many of the “M” generation are wary of anything related to “organized religion” and thus this reaching out program. The ministry is very optimistic regarding the effort- I will keep you informed of the results. Check out THRED.org.

It occurred to me that we too already reach out to others via text, chats, e>mails and many other electronic venues today. You have your attentive audience and perhaps this venue is perfect for you to dialogue about Jesus from a keyboard rather than face to face. To dialogue, you must be grounded in scripture and thus my pitch about bible studies. We need to always be ready to proclaim Jesus by words and deeds. Reverend Gregory Seltz, speaker of the Lutheran Hour recently noted that “your calling, whatever you are doing in life, is to show God’s love to other people.” Let us rally to the call today-

Matt. 5:16 *Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.” Amen*

Missions & Ministries



St. Paul's Angel Tree

is set up in the narthex across from the kitchen.
Please stop by and select a child to purchase a gift for.

All gifts are due back by Sunday, December 11,
wrapped and include the Angel label for
identification. Thank you St. Paul's for once again
stepping up to help those in need.

St. Paul's Shares is helping our community through an Elementary School & The Mission

School in Waldorf needs are:

Winter clothing for children, grades 3rd – 5th.

Hats, scarfs, mittens and coats (gently used or new and please remove all store tags)

Non-perishable boxed and canned foods

The Mission in Lexington Park:

Canned meats: tuna, chicken, ham, turkey

Top Ramen or any meal that just needs water

Vegetable stew or soups

Cereal (Boxed)

Peanut Butter

Jelly

Canned Vegetables or Fruit

Small Can Openers



Pasta or Rice

Spaghetti Sauce

Crackers

Chef Boyardee or store brand items (Beef Ravioli, Spaghetti, etc.)

Thank you

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
Anniversaries 5 – Bruce & Jill Schumaker 19 – Elvis & Betty Ann Wathen 30 – Tom & Barbara Youngson		Birthdays 3 – Rick Lacey 4 – Dylan Otte 5 – Elizabeth Bostwick 6 – Jack Guntow 7 – Melva Fuchs 9 – Paul Mehrkam, Lucy Price & Karen Wiggen 11 – Chris Curtis 15 – Sherri Maack 20 – John Short		1	2	3
				<div> Peacemakers Seminars Dec. 1 & 2 @ 6 – 9 pm Dec. 3 @ 8 – 11 am </div>		
4 <u>VOTERS MEETING – after 10:30 svc.</u> Service Times: 8:00 & 10:30 am Praise Service: 9:15 am Sunday School: 9 am Adult Class: 9:10 am Acolytes: 8:00 Emily Maack 10:30 Allison Werth Reader @ 10:30: Gene Bostwick	5	6	7 Advent Service 7 pm Special Guests: Mark & Megan Mantey LCMS Missionaries serving in Uganda	8	9	10
11 Service Times: READINGS & REJOICINGS services 8:00 & 10:30 am Praise Service: 9:15 am Sunday School: 9 am Adult Class: 9:10 am Acolytes: 8:00 Aidan Price 10:30 Mary McNutt Reader @ 10:30: Cindy Werth Angel Tree Gifts Due	12	13 Church Council Meeting 6:30 pm	14 Advent Service 7 pm	15	16	17
18 Service Times: 8:00 & Sunday School Christmas Program @ 10:30 am Praise Service: 9:15 am Sunday School: 9 am Adult Class: 9:10 am Acolytes: 8:00 Dylan Otte 10:30 Nicole Williams Reader @ 10:30: Lois Beverage Night of Christmas Love & Worship 7:00 pm	19	20	21 Advent Service 7 pm	22	23	24  Christmas Eve Worship Services Noon 7 pm 9 pm Reader at 7 pm: Melissa Chew
25 Christmas Day 10:00 am Service Reader: Jim Shewbridge 	26	27	28	29	30	31 New Years Eve



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St. Paul's Lutheran Church

37707 New Market Turner Road
Mechanicsville, MD 20659-3075

Sunday Services:

Traditional - 8:00 and 10:30 am

Contemporary – 9:15 am

Sunday School: 9:00 am

Adult Bible Study: 9:10 am

Office Hours Mon.-Fri. 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

Phone: 301.884.5184 Fax: 301-884-2063

Website: www.stpaulssomd.org

Email: stpaulslcmsmd@netzero.net

Facebook: [St. Paul's Lutheran](#)

Behold, now is the favorable time;

Behold, now is the day of salvation.

2 Corinthians 6:2

Connecting with Jesus, each other, & Southern Maryland

Dates to Remember:

Sun. Dec. 4 – Voters Meeting after 10:30 service

Wed. Dec. 7 – Advent Svc @ 7 pm

Sun. Dec. 11 – Reading & Rejoicings Services 8 & 10:30 am

Wed. Dec. 14 – Advent Svc @ 7 pm

Sun. Dec. 18 – Sunday School Christmas Program 10:30 am

Sun. Dec. 18 – Night of Christmas Love & Worship 7 pm

Wed. Dec. 21 – Advent Svc @ 7 pm

Sat. Dec. 24 – CHRISTMAS EVE services: noon, 7pm, & 9pm

Sun. Dec. 25 – CHRISTMAS DAY service 10:00 am