

Cross Connections

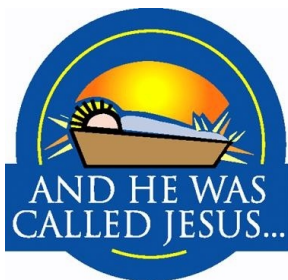


St. Paul's Lutheran Church

December 2018

Mid-Week Advent Services: Images of God

by Pastor Ali



A Jewish son of a carpenter from the backwater town of Bethlehem is probably not the image we had in mind for God. As Duke Divinity school Professor Will Willimon writes, "God surprised us not only by

appearing in human form, but as a person who looked suspiciously like the annoying guy next door, an undeniably human person who hungered, thirsted, rejoiced, suffered, raged, wept, and died as all persons do." Yet this surprising image of God is not merely an image. This carpenter's son born in Bethlehem is God incarnate, whose life, death, and resurrection on this earth changes everything.

This Advent, as we prepare for the coming of Christ – for God incarnate – we look for and celebrate the many other strange and surprising ways in which Emmanuel dwells with us already. During the midweek Advent services this season, we will continue to explore 'Images of God.' Join us throughout the coming weeks as we explore four lesser-known biblical images of God, and in doing so, as we seek to experience the richness of God Emmanuel, the God of many names.

Service Schedule

- ✠ Advent I – Wednesday, Dec 5th at 7 pm: God the Migrant
- ✠ Advent II - Wednesday, Dec 12th at 7 pm: God the Bread
- ✠ Advent III - Wednesday, Dec 19th at 7 pm: God the Warrior
- ✠ Advent IV – Sunday, Dec 23rd at 8:30 and 11 am: God the Birthing Mother

Wednesday Meals in Advent

Dec 5th and 12th at 5:45 pm, we will have our typical Advent meals in Trinity Hall. We start earlier to enable handbells to get supper before their rehearsal times. On Wed, Dec 19th, we will have our annual Christmas celebration meal.

Details will be forthcoming on RSVPs and menu.



Christmas Pageant

Sunday, December 16 at 5:00 will be our annual Christmas Pageant and lasagna supper. Everyone is invited to enjoy the children's interpretation of the birth of our Savior, ending with a fine fellowship meal.



The Rev. Scott M. Anderson, Pastor
Susan Esposito, Parish Administrator & Editor
Jacqueline Nappi, Minister of Music
Amanda Stoen, Preschool Director
Megan Hoewisch, Vicar

The Rev. Ali Tranvik, Associate Pastor, Duke Lutherans
The Rev. Dr. Charles R. Huggins, Pastor Emeritus

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From the Pastor...

Romans 8:28-29 *"Those who love God...are called according to his purpose...to be conformed to the image of his Son."*

We are called to be the church the body of Christ for the world. We are called to allow the Holy Spirit to work in us so that we might discern what God is calling us to do and to be. The Holy Spirit comes to us to purify and clarify the Divine within us. What we do grows out of us as a response to the transforming power of God within us.

We are about to enter the season of Advent, Christmas, the year of Luke, a year to concentrate on what it means to be the church, and to hear how God deals with the underdog and downtrodden.

Advent is a time of waiting. We wait to celebrate Christ's coming at Christmas, but the season is a penitential season that calls us to anticipate the second coming of our Lord and to call on him to come to us quickly. Advent is a time to purify our hearts and clarify our lives. We are called to prayer and focus, so that we might be dutiful in our service, obedient in our worship, and repentant of our sins.

Luke is the Gospel of the underdog. We, the people gathered at St. Paul's, will read and study this Gospel as the primary Gospel in 2019. Luke wants us to know that God turns the world upside down and we as the body of Christ for the world, are called to service.

Our church and synod will be emphasizing a year of mission and vision. We will strive to discern what God is calling us to do with the resources that we have. Jesus tells us to take stock of what resources are available, offer them to him, give thanks to God and let Jesus bless what we have and distribute it.

As we prepare for the new year, may you be a people of prayer that prays for God's guidance, direction and peace. May the God of hope guide us all in the new year.

God bless you all this Advent, Christmas and New Year.

Peace, Pastor Scott

From the Vicar...

Many of you have asked me how I, a California girl through and through, ended up at a seminary in the south (I went to seminary in Atlanta, GA). I generally say that it came down to money and adventure – Candler School of Theology in Atlanta offered great scholarships and a chance to experience a new part of the world. But I really ought to say that I chose

Candler because of money, adventure, and prisons.

I have had a prison pen-pal for almost eight years. Bob is a friend, confidant, and brother in Christ, and he's also been incarcerated for roughly half of his 60-some years. Through our letters and visits, I have gotten to know both a beloved child of God *and* the underside of our criminal justice system. As I applied to seminaries, I felt called to bring Bob along for the journey. I needed my seminary experience to provide academic rigor *and* engagement with the grittier aspects of life. So when it came to deciding between several seminaries that all offered money and adventure, I chose the school that also had a robust prison internship program. Bob might not be able to go to class with me, but I could go into the prison with Bob's Georgian counterparts.

The women I met at the prison where I interned for two years are smart, funny, musical, deep, spiritual, complex individuals with stories worthy of a great novelist. In other words: they're real people. Saint and sinner, just like us. And just like us, God's grace offers them forgiveness, transformation, and the chance to start anew.

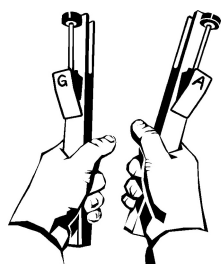
This year, through Durham Congregations in Action (DCIA) and the Durham Re-Entry Committee, we have the chance to help former prisoners start anew. The Durham Re-Entry Committee is putting together "Welcome Home" packages to give formerly incarcerated persons. These packages will contain supplies that people need to readjust to society safely and with integrity. DCIA is asking its partner congregations (that's us!) to donate Wal-Mart gift cards in either \$35 or \$40 denominations. These cards will help formerly incarcerated persons buy pre-paid cell phones and the hygiene items that work for them. These gift cards are really buying dignity and self-sufficiency.

So as you're contemplating the gifts you'll be buying this Christmas, please consider purchasing a gift card in your loved's one's honor. You can drop off the gift cards to me or to Pastor Scott, and we'll see that they get to DCIA. Of course, there are plenty of other opportunities to use your purchasing power for good here at St. Paul's – don't forget the SERRV program or the Giving Tree on behalf of Durham Urban Ministries!

Ever since I came to St. Paul's, this church has been in Bob's prayers. I ask that you include incarcerated people in your prayers and in your Christmas purchasing. Thank you!

Vicar Megan

Music Notes



by Jacqueline Nappi

Our newly formed **Chime Choir** will begin rehearsals in December on Sunday mornings. This group is open to **kids ages 8-12**. We will be playing at the **4:00 pm Christmas Eve service** along with our little **Cherub Ringers**

(ages 8 and under). We do still have a **need for more Cherub Ringers!** This group gets to ring the small multi-colored bells and sing a few songs on **Sunday mornings from 9:45-10:00 am** – please join us!

Wednesday Evening Advent Services

Come a few minutes early on Wednesday evening and enjoy a little meditative pre-service music played by Tom Kraska, George Seiz, and myself. A chime will be rung following pre-service music to indicate the start of the Advent Service with Duke Lutherans and Pastor Ali. Services begin at 7:00 pm.

Music on Christmas Eve

- ▮ 4:00 pm Chimes Choir and Cherub Ringers
- ▮ 7:00 pm Laudate Handbells and St. Paul's Choir
- ▮ 10:00 pm Trumpets and Special Soloists

Still Reforming

by Pastor Ali

A few weeks ago, Duke Lutherans gathered to drink hot cider, sing “A Mighty Fortress,” and attempt to carve Martin Luther’s face into the side of a pumpkin (some of us did better than others). We were celebrating the 501st anniversary of the Reformation, but also our conviction that God is *still* at work, still reforming us, still making us new.

As the semester comes to a close, we look back and give thanks for the ways we’ve seen God at work here at Duke Lutherans this fall:

- **Sunday Evening Prayer**, where 15-20 undergraduates and graduates, marching band members and athletes, seminarians and scientists, Lutherans and non-Lutherans, church members and community members gather to be fed spiritually in Word and Sacrament and physically in the fellowship dinner that follows.
- **Bible Study & Pub Theology** conversations where we wrestle with hard questions (only to come away with more)

- **A local pilgrimage**, which brought together Duke Lutherans, members of St. Paul’s and Grace, and community members for a weekend of exploring how our faith connects to the place that we live
- **Adopt-a-Duke-Lutheran**, a new program that has paired 19 Duke Lutherans and St. Paul’s/Grace families for shared meals, worship, and outings in Durham
- **A bilingual tutoring program** where we work with kids from the local Latino community (and try to pick up some Spanish along the way!)
- **Cooking and eating** with families from Durham’s newly-arrived refugee community

Thank you for the many ways that you here at St. Paul’s support this ever-reforming and transformative ministry, as together we trust in the God who is making all things new!

If you would like to learn more about ways you can support this ministry, please contact Pastor Ali at ahw22@duke.edu. You can also visit us online at www.dukelutherans.org.

Preschool Pitter Patter

by Amanda Stoen



We enjoyed many gatherings during the month of November at the preschool. Together with their families, our Preschool gathered together and enjoyed delicious foods,

including family favorites and foods from other cultures. We talked about who and what we are thankful for – our family, friends, teachers, macaroni, cars, dogs, kitties and even our preschool t-shirts!

During the month of December the preschool will be collecting hats, mittens and scarves for Urban Ministries in Durham. If you would like to donate any new items please leave them in the collection bin in the narthex.

In January, we will begin enrollment for Fall 2019. We will be offering classes for children ages 10 months - 4 years old. If you are interested, or know of anyone who is, registration forms will be available and tours will begin in January. If you have any questions in the meantime, please let me know. We ask for your continued prayers throughout the school year.

Nurturing Committee

St. Paul's is beginning a new ministry starting in January 2019 called the St. Paul's Nurturing Committee. This ministry is to provide a caring/social connection to individuals who would benefit from:



- ◆ A friendly or encouraging phone chat
- ◆ Receiving caring notes
- ◆ Staying connected to homebound members
- ◆ Welcomed and shepherded as a newcomer
- ◆ Helped when confronted with a family illness or family disaster

What the St. Paul's Nurturing Committee proposes to do is to act as a coordinating component for a variety of ministries that already exist at St. Paul's, and also to propose variations of some old ones and a few new ones. It is an opportunity to touch base with someone and communicate care and friendliness from the St. Paul's Church Community.

Existing ministries like Stephen Ministry, Women's Connection, and New Member Ministry will have a coordinator for that group serving as a liaison to the Nurturing Committee, and newly formed and re-formed committees will have a coordinator that works with other members of St. Paul's willing to work in a particular aspect or aspects of this nurturing initiative. The following St. Paul's Members have agreed to serve these needs:

- **Stephen Ministry:** Liaison, Audrey Busch
- **Women's Connection:** Coordinator/Liaison, Carol Ostrowski
- **New Member Ministry:** Coordinator/Liaison, George Seiz
- **Telephone Ministry:** Coordinator, Katherine Trexler

As part of the Nurturing Committee, the phone ministry is to provide a social connection to individuals who would benefit from a friendly phone conversation. It is an opportunity to have someone from church to talk with on a regular basis, a "Reach-Out" connection. The participant does not need to have a special need to be involved, but just want to stay connected with church when unable to attend on a regular basis. This will also be an opportunity for some social support if someone is homebound and restricted to home. This ministry will not be a regular security check, but a social connection.

Note Writing Ministry: Coordinator, Bonnie Cooper

As part of the Nurturing Committee, the note writing ministry is an opportunity to provide a connection with a card/letter/note expressing joy, concern, encouragement, sympathy. It gives the recipient a connectedness and some caring support from the church. Through the note writing ministry, volunteer ministers will touch the recipient with care, encouragement, celebration, or sympathy. Names will be provided from church prayers, bulletin notes, and referral from Pastor, Vicar, or church members.

Food Ministry: Coordinators, Sally Hart and Karen Myzk

The Fellowship Committee at present coordinates the Wednesday meals and larger community meal receptions for funerals and fellowship. The focus of the Nurturing Committee Food Ministry, not unlike an aspect of the former St. Paul's Committee known as the Stand-By Committee, is to provide a meal when a member comes home from the hospital, or is faced with a life crisis event. We seek members who are willing to bake/cook when called upon for such a need and drop off a meal to a member in need.

Transportation Ministry: Coordinator, Diana Dominick

As part of the Nurturing Committee, the transportation ministry is an opportunity to assist St. Paul's members who need help with transportation to church activities or services. Someone with transportation needs would be able to contact this ministry to facilitate getting rides to attend church.

Getting Involved:

The Committee will receive input of congregational care needs from the Pastoral and Administrative staff, from members by way of filling out pew cards and placing them in the collection plate, or by members sending an e-mail to:

nurture@stpaulsdurham.org. Marcia Redman and Janet Seiz are working to collect the congregational care needs, and monitoring the nurture e-mail address.

Once a member's care need is identified, it will be communicated to the Coordinator of the Nurturing Committee Ministries for action. The Coordinators will be relying on developing a list of helpers for each of these ministries.

We will be having a bulletin insert in the near future which will provide you an opportunity to indicate which part(s) of the Nurturing Committee Ministry you wish to be part of.

All Saints Sunday

On All Saints Sunday, November 4, we recognized the following who have died since last All Saints Sunday: Doris Tilley, Kayla Gilbert, and Ruby Hooft. We also dedicated the stain glass window repairs and one octave of handbells which were purchased through Memorial Funds.



Sacrament of Holy Baptism

We welcomed Elizabeth Brynn Randles, daughter of Amanda and Edward Randles, by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism at the 11:00 am service on Sunday, November 18. Elizabeth was born November 19, 2018.

Dear Saturday work crew,

On behalf of the preschool, thank you so much for all of your efforts over the past several months working on improving the drainage to the playground! We have had several hard rains and even a hurricane or two pass through, and this is the best the water has drained since the playground was built! We truly appreciate all of the volunteer hours put in to help drain the water. We look forward to playing in it this winter without standing water.

Amanda Stoen,
Preschool Director



Drivers Wanted!

St. Paul's has a van and a handicap accessible bus, and we have members who do not drive or due to health reasons, cannot drive for a period of time. We are in need of volunteers who are willing to sign up for one time per month to transport people to church. You do not need a special driver's license to drive either, but you will need information that is provided at church regarding the proper safety of wheelchair transportation. If you are willing to give one Sunday a month to minister to others, please



contact a staff member at church.

Changes of Address:

Gus Holshouser
2513 Croasdaile Farm Pkwy Apt 4
Durham NC 27705 cell: 919-886-3025

Curt and Frieda Hahn
318 N Los Feliz
Chandler AZ 85226

New Members

We will be receiving new members on Sunday, December 9. If you are interested in joining at this time, please contact Pastor Scott Anderson by phone at the church (919-489-3214) or email him at pastor@stpaulsdurham.org.

Memorials Received

We thank the following for their donations in memory of Ruby Hooft:

- + Marilyn H. Fox, Elon, NC
- + Carolyn and Richard Franks, Burlington, NC
- + Christian Workers Class, Burlington, NC
- + Wanda and Terry Whichard, Leland, NC to Stephen Ministries

Reflections on Stephen Ministry at St. Paul's

- + "I believe my Stephen Minister helped me get through a difficult time and I would not hesitate to recommend this service to anyone."
- + "The most meaningful aspect of the visits with my Stephen Minister was her patient and listening ear, our shared Bible study and her kind and unexpected check-in calls. I think it's a wonderful ministry and many people could benefit from the experience."
- + "The wisdom shared by examples of similar issues to my own straight from the Bible – I am not alone! It has reminded me to stop and make time out of my busy day to pray and be thankful."

Do these comments resonate with you? If you think you'd like to consider having a Stephen Minister, please contact Pastor Scott. Your inquiry will be kept in confidence!

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Young In Spirit

The Young In Spirit activity for December is on Saturday, December 1 at 2:00 pm when we will be attending a live radio play "It's a Wonderful Life" at the Orange County Passmore Senior Center in Hillsborough, 103 Meadowlands Drive. This beloved American holiday classic comes to life as a 1940s radio broadcast. An ensemble of a few dozen characters on the stage has the story of idealistic George Bailey unfold as he considers ending his life on a fateful Christmas Eve. It will take the help of a lovable angel to show George what life would be like if he hadn't been born. Join us for this joyous story of redemption. We will have an early dinner at Bennett Point Grill after the play. Tickets can be purchased at www.ocpnc.com or at the Passmore Center for \$15 in advance or \$18 at the door.



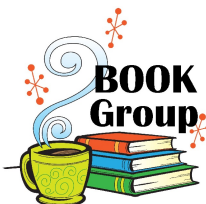
Fun for Seniors

Katherine Circle

All women are invited to the Katherine Circle meeting on Tuesday, December 11 at 10:00 am in Trinity Hall. Nan Treul will present the devotion. Vicar Megan is presenting our program and after the program we will enjoy Christmas caroling.

St. Paul's Readers

Everyone is invited to join us when we discuss our next book, Walking Across Egypt, by Clyde Edgerton, on Thursday, December 20th at 3:00 pm in the library. The January book selection is A Gentleman in Moscow, by Amor Towles.



Christmas Pageant

Christmas Pageant rehearsals will be taking place on **Saturdays, December 1, 8, and 15 at 10:00 am** in Trinity Hall. We invite all families with children of all ages to join us for one or more rehearsals – all are welcome. Everyone – please join us in Trinity Hall on **Sunday, December 16 at 5:00 pm** for the annual children's Christmas Pageant followed by a lasagna, salad, and garlic bread supper! It is an opportunity to see our children expressing their faith and a chance to share in fellowship with others.



Christmas Concert and Sing-a-long

Join us on Sunday, December 23 at 4:00 pm for a wonderful concert and sing-a-long with soprano Jessica Cates and our wonderful **Laudate Handbell Choir**. After a fun Christmas medley played by the Handbells, Jessica will sing a few beautiful and fun arrangements of Christmas favorites such as O Holy Night, Silent Night, and Away in a Manger by Mark Hayes, as well as Mozart's popular Alleluia and Laudate Dominum. Ending with sing-a-long Christmas Carols, this concert is sure to get you in the Christmas spirit! A free-will offering will be collected for the St. Paul's Music Ministry.



Christmas Eve Services, all celebrating Holy Communion

- + 4:00 pm Family Worship Service, with Chimes Choir and Cherub Ringers
- + 7:00 pm Worship with Laudate Handbells and St. Paul's Choir
- + 10:00 pm Worship with Trumpets and Special Soloists

