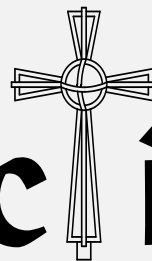


Cross Connections



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

September 2020

Stewardship 2021

Our Stewardship Emphasis this year in September is going to be different ... just like everything else is different these days!

- We are looking forward to getting together in small-group settings via Zoom meetings.
- In these meetings, we will have an opportunity to share our thoughts about next year's Budget for Ministries.
- We will hear about the main programmatic emphases that are being set by the Congregation Council.
- We will talk and pray together.
- We will continue to be the Body of Christ at St. Paul's.



Please join us in one of the small-group meetings!! Look for sign-up information in your Parish Notes. For those without email access – someone will be contacting you! Watch for more information in your mailbox as well.

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

Jackie Fryt, Bookkeeper

The Rev. Amanda Highben, Associate Pastor, Duke Lutherans

The Rev. Dr. Charles R. Huggins, Pastor Emeritus

pastor@stpaulsdurham.org

admin@stpaulsdurham.org

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amanda.highben@duke.edu

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Facebook: St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, ELCA

FROM THE PASTOR

1 Peter 4:10 – *As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.*

It is that time of year, when our minds turn to preparing for the coming year. Each year we make a plan and hope to be able to spend according to the plan. Each year we ask one another to make a commitment to the life we share at St. Paul's. Each year we ask you to give in thanks for the gift of grace and the blessings God bestows.

So, even in pandemic, we are called to a time of discernment and care for God's people at St. Paul's. To that end we will be hosting a series of cottage meetings. Some will be in person and others via Zoom. We will also have some temple talks recorded and sent out with the regular weekly worship service.

Our theme this year is centered around Luther's explanations to our beliefs in which he ends with the words "this is most certainly true".

It is most certainly true that God loves us, that we love God and one another. It is most certainly true that we will worship together in person again. It is most certainly true that we are still a thriving fellowship. It is most certainly true that we have hope for the future and love for our heritage. It is most certainly true that St. Paul's will turn 100 years old in 2022.

So, I certainly hope you will join us for one of our cottage meetings to discuss finances for 2021 and help us set a plan.

- Sun, Sept 13 at 11 am (in person under the tent outside near Whitesell Hall)
- Wed, Sept 16 at 7 pm Zoom
- Thurs, Sept 17 at 7 pm Zoom
- Sun, Sept 20 at 11 am (in person under the tent outside near Whitesell Hall)
- Sun, Sept 20 at 3 pm Zoom
- Mon, Sept 21 at 10 am (coffee hour Zoom)
- Wed, Sept 23 at 12 noon Zoom

Here is the link to register for one of the meetings:

<https://forms.gle/JvUSg3RzHcXqRN2n8>

You will also receive an email with the link. So, please join us as we prayerfully consider our future.

God's peace.

Pastor Scott

Help Me Get to Know You

Dear friends at St. Paul's, you have been so friendly and generous in your welcoming that I feel very loved. Now I want to ask one more thing of you. Help me get to know you better.

In normal times, we would have a chance to chat after the service, at Sunday school, or at congregational dinners. I would have the chance to hear about your lives, your families, and all sorts of things that create the glue that holds us together as friends. I would also perhaps hear what is troubling you and know to include it in my personal prayers.

Alas, this wretched pandemic has put a spanner in the works here at church, at school, at work, and at home. We see each other from the nose up at drive-through communion. And we are blessed to be able to see each other over Zoom – although some of us may be getting Zoomed out, as kids have to sit for online classes and adults compete for internet resources for work. So, let me suggest some specific things that we might do.

If you can stand just a little bit more Zoom, join us for the Monday morning coffee hour. The group that gathers is small, but we have a great time talking about anything we want.

Also, join us for Bible study on Thursday morning. This is more structured, but there are chances to speak up and ask questions, and we usually spend a few minutes in fellowship before we get started talking about the Bible.

Call me, maybe? I would love to get to know each of you and have a chance to hear about what's happening in your lives. Tell me about your kids, your parents, your work life, how you came to live in Durham – and tell me about your dogs and cats! I am in the office Monday through Thursday, and if I am tied up, I can call you back.

If you happen to be by the church, drop by and say hello. There is usually coffee in Trinity Hall, and we can sit six feet apart and talk through our masks. You can even show me pictures of your family members or pets.

Drop me an email and tell me about yourself! I love hearing about people – what's happened in your lives, how you met that special someone, what your kids or grandkids are doing and their accomplishments. You can write me at vicar@stpaulsdurham.org.

And if things are not going well, tell me about that also, and we can talk about things that aren't at their best and pray about them together.

Finally, check out the new Facebook group for St. Paul's. You can find it at

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2364775460484568>

This is a place for us to talk about whatever we want to talk about, so feel free to use it!

I'm looking forward to hearing from you!

Judy Goans, Vicar

Music Updates

by Jacqueline Nappi

Choir, Handbells, and Youth Choir is starting up again in September ... virtually!

This season, the function of these special music groups will more clearly reflect their early Lutheran church origins. During the earliest days of Lutheran worship, the choir or cantor's primary role in worship was to learn and teach the congregation in the singing of the liturgy and psalms and, eventually, the chorales or hymns; it wasn't until later on that the organ took on a more prominent role in the accompaniment of chorales, liturgy, and other congregational singing. In our present day pandemic, there are countless creative ways in which we can incorporate early Lutheran worship music themes into our video and audio recordings. By reconsidering the primary role and function of the choir, handbells, children's voices, and the organ we can significantly enhance our worship experience with these music groups. Because of technology, we have the ability to record and edit music in such a way that the choir can sing an entire hymn a cappella, or a single verse, or substitute a special arrangement of the psalm verses, or a harmonization of the Kyrie, and so on. The handbells can be added into the liturgy, hymns, psalms; and we don't have to worry about not having enough ringers or singers in one place at the same time because we'll be recording each part separately anyway!

The Choir will continue to meet on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 pm via Zoom for rehearsals. Individual choir members will record themselves at home singing their parts outside of rehearsal. If you are interested in adding your voice - we would love for you to join us! You can reach out to me via email: music@stpaulsdurham.org

The Handbell and Youth Choir rehearsals are TBD with potential bell rehearsals in Trinity Hall (with masks and distanced) and Youth Choir meeting remotely on Zoom.

Please reach out to me if you are interested in ringing or adding your voice to our worship videos!

Council Corner Sept 2020

by Tina Bessias, Council President

As we enter the season of fall, the life of the church goes on in ways we couldn't have imagined a year ago. Pastor Anderson plans and records the worship service each week, Jackie Nappi records the music, Susan Esposito creates the worship guide in

PDF format, and our team of video editors takes turns creating the service. So far the editing has been done by Jonathan Maine, Tim Hoke, Dean Redman, and Jackie Nappi. Many thanks to all of them! Soon you'll hear the voices of our choir return to weekly services.

The Congregation Council approved new by-laws for the Preschool in July, and Kim Hoke has stepped into the role of board chair. Exciting news: the program is slated to re-open Sept 8! You may have seen an invitation in Parish Notes to help provide supplies; please contribute as you are able.

The Council is engaged with the Finance and Stewardship committees in planning for 2021. You can participate, too, by attending a cottage meeting this month. See the link in Parish Notes or check with Steve Mzyk (mzykst@gmail.com) about a time. This will be an opportunity to socialize, get updates about our financial status, discuss the significance of the vicar program, and consider your stewardship of time and talents. Most of these meetings will be over Zoom, but we are also offering an in-person option: two of the meetings will take place in the tent set up by Wildflower Cottage on the west side of the sanctuary. Please sign up for a meeting that fits your schedule and preference.

Pledges for the 2021 operating fund will be consecrated at the October 4 worship service. The finance team will use those pledges to estimate income and for the year. If you are hesitant about pledging, please be assured that a) it helps the planning process greatly, and b) it can be changed at any time. Only Rod Runestad and Phil Hart, our financial secretaries, work with our bookkeeper, Jackie Fryt, to record contributions, and they will make changes for you immediately and confidentially if your circumstances should change. I think of pledging as a leap of faith, which I also think when I buy an airline ticket at a good price far ahead of a trip: it's impossible to know if this will make sense months from now, but it makes sense in present circumstances. I'm always a little amazed when things work as planned, but they usually do.

If you would like to consider running for a seat on the Congregation Council, it's not too early to inquire. Elections for three seats will be held at the congregational meeting in December. We'd love to know about it if you're interested in serving. Reach out to any current council member if you'd like to know more.

Finally, the COVID-19 Task Force will meet again September 15. By then we'll have a sense of how the local community is faring with Duke

University in session. Meantime, let us all continue making St. Paul’s-in-Pandemic the best it can be!

Still Called: Duke Lutherans 2020 Matching Campaign

Two weeks ago we launched our 2020 Matching Campaign and affirmed that the Duke Lutherans community of faith is still called to life together. Now, just three weeks into classes, we’ve already discovered this to be true: our life together is active and alive. We’ve gathered for virtual Sunday Evening Prayer, met over Zoom for fellowship lunches, assembled and distributed care packages and prayer journals, and have made plans for a fall Bible study series and other opportunities for faith formation and service-learning.

Thank you so very much to everyone who has made generous donations so far. With your help we are confident we’ll fulfill and even surpass our \$35,000 goal. Remember, every dollar you give to Duke Lutherans from now until Reformation Sunday (Oct 31) will be matched 1:1! As was true last year, this means a gift of \$25 becomes \$50, \$100 becomes \$200, and \$1000 becomes \$2,000 – all of which will enable us to develop a sustainable future and be here for the Duke Lutherans still to come.

This link will take you to a secure giving site through Duke University where you can make a one-time or repeating donation. Simply write “Duke Lutherans” in the memo line:

<https://www.gifts.duke.edu/>

Or simply write a check payable to Duke Lutherans and mail it to St. Paul’s.



When we announced our campaign, we also shared that the top giver this year of \$10,000 or more will receive a commissioned piece of choral music by Dr. Zebulon Highben. Highben, the Director of Music at Duke Chapel, is a prolific and award-winning composer with more than 50 published works.

The donor will choose the dedication and work together with Zeb on the commission’s details. We trust this will be an unforgettable way to honor a special person or celebrate a meaningful event, such as a milestone anniversary or birthday.

To give you a taste of Zeb’s music, we’ve included links here to three of his pieces. Though each has a different style, all were commissioned by individuals or churches for church choirs. (Each page includes an audio link, video link, or both.)

* A Prayer for the Church: for SATB chorus and piano <http://www.zebulonhighben.com/satb#/prayerforthechurch>

* Lord Jesus, You Shall Be My Song: for SATB chorus with assembly, organ, and oboe <http://www.zebulonhighben.com/satb#/jesusmysong>

* Psalm 100: for SATB chorus, soloist, and percussion <http://www.zebulonhighben.com/satb#/psalm100>

Thank you again, dear friends, for the countless ways you support and care for our students. Together with our God of love and grace, you make it possible for us to do this invaluable work, and we are deeply grateful.

Peace,

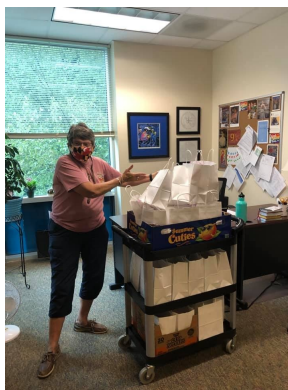
Pastor Amanda (amanda.highben@duke.edu) and the Duke Lutherans Committee



Duke Lutherans Care Packages

by Pastor Amanda Highben

Because opportunities to be with our students in person this year are very limited, the Duke Lutherans Committee has assembled care packages as a tangible way to show our love and support for them. A very special thank you to Committee members Linda Foreman and Emily Pauline for assembling the 30 packages, all of which include popcorn, granola bars, ramen noodles, post-its, highlighters and pens, and a few other fun and helpful items. Students will also receive prayer journals filled with prayers (for help, patience, safety, and strength)



and blank spaces to journal and write their own prayers. The Committee plans to send additional care packages throughout the year, such as at Halloween and before finals.

Preschool Pitter Patter



by Amanda Stoen

St. Paul's Preschool & PMO is delighted to announce our reopening for the 2020-2021 school year! Our first day of preschool begins Tuesday, September 8. We continue to offer

preschool for children 10 months through 4 years old this year. We will begin with reduced class sizes and expect to add a few more families this fall, and throughout the school year as families are ready to send their child back to preschool.

The preschool board and staff have worked very hard throughout the summer to figure out how to reopen safely. We will implement new procedures and protocols based on the Childcare Strong NC Public Health Toolkit provided by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. Our focus is to provide a safe learning environment for our children and staff. Some of our new procedures include wearing masks while inside the building as well as outside when social distancing is not possible, daily health screenings for staff and children, shifting to outdoor spaces as much as possible, washing hands more frequently, separate groups of children that do not interact with each other, and additional cleaning procedures.

Preschoolers are by nature social beings. The function of a preschool is to teach children about self-regulation skills, personal space, accepted behaviors in a group setting, read facial expressions and body language, and learn self-control in social situations. We know that outdoor learning environments stimulate the diversity of children's play experiences and contribute to healthy childhood development, including slowing the spread of COVID-19. Our preschool plans to be outside as much as possible, and we have created several outdoor spaces to bring our preschool classrooms outside. Teachers will continue to create lesson plans, offer literacy, math and science activities, support children's social and emotional development and create a warm and inviting preschool experience.

It is important to remember that these safety measures are temporary. They may last most or all of the school year, but they are not forever. We will be able to gather in larger groups and hold preschool wide events again. But for now, we want to protect our staff and families as much as possible. We ask for your prayers as we embark on a unique preschool school

year. We have a committed staff who is excited to return to the classroom, outside, and teach young children.

Let's all go BACK TO SCHOOL!

CCG (Continuing Conversation Group) invites you – yes, that includes you – to join us on Wednesday, Sept 30 at 7:00 pm for an evening exploring issues of racial equity in education. We'll hear about some of the history that has led us to the current gaps in funding and achievement across schools of our state. We'll talk about some of the challenges of the digital divide, which COVID-19 has made even more crucial.

The 2020 Report of the Local School Finance Forum for North Carolina found that:



There is a widening gap between wealthier counties and those with lower levels of wealth. Wealthier counties have more taxable resources, they are able to keep tax rates low while still generating significant revenue. Conversely, lower wealth counties with fewer taxable resources have to make greater taxing effort to support their schools.

Thus, residents living in lower wealth districts face substantially greater financial burden to support public education while still finding that their schools are more poorly resourced than those in wealthier counties.

CCG members have been researching ways that St. Paul's members can support students and teachers in neighborhood schools near our church, and we hope to hear from some congregation members who are teachers. To give some historical context, Heather Slane will give a brief presentation about Rosenwald Schools in North Carolina. The CCG committee is gathering a small packet of resources for members who would like to learn more about the digital divide, and about local efforts to enhance education in Durham.

Disparity in public education is a large, very complex issue. We're planning that our Zoom gathering on Sept. 30 will take 1.5 hours (with a break). But even so, this can only be the first in a series of gatherings as we try to learn about the problems and look for ways that we can help contribute to solutions.

Please join us: Help us learn about this important

way to support the future of our community and of all our children. The Zoom link will be sent out in Parish Notes during late September.

UPCOMING

It will soon be election time! Please save the date: On October 7th, at 7:00 pm, the Continuing Conversation Group will host an evening Zoom session on Elections and Gerrymandering. We'll present information about the absentee ballot process, and the start of early voting, from October 15 until October 31. Please plan to join us on Zoom at 7:00 pm on Wednesday, October 7.

Racism, Religion, and Reconciliation

Last spring, Imam Abdul Waheed taught a Sunday School series at St. Paul's on the Islamic faith. Now we have another opportunity to continue this dialogue. For ten weeks at OLLI this fall, Imam Waheed will be leading an OLLI course on Racism, Religion, and Reconciliation as a Zoom virtual class. To quote from the course description:

Our country has labored for many years to make seemingly significant racial progress. However, . . . we are confronted once again with an incendiary environment of racial tension. No group promoting its superiority over others will create a healthy and stable climate in America for authentic interracial harmony. Using a combination of lecture and guest presentations, we will address some of the hidden causes of racism and its effects on our community life. In addition, we will highlight the value and importance of our humanity, which is common in all of us despite our race, religion, and ethnicity.

OLLI is the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Duke University. Imam Waheed's class will meet on Zoom on Thursday mornings from Sept 17 through Nov 19. Registration starts on Sept 2. Information about registration is available at www.learnmore.duke.edu/OLLI. Tuition is \$100, and there is a scholarship rate for community members who request it. If you would like to request financial support to attend OLLI courses, please e-mail Kathy.Parrish@duke.edu and ask about the "Community Membership."

A Letter to the Congregation

"I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart.... And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God." Philippians 1:3-11

My dear St. Paul's family,

Many of you know that I have struggled with deepening depression during the past 5 months. This is not surprising for an extrovert who needs people as much as she needs air. As with all crises, the pandemic, political division, and racial rifts have left a stain on so many. Though I have tried to feel a connection with you via the thoughtfully conceived online worship services and zoom gatherings, I have been unable to bridge the gap between the norm and the new norm. I admire those who are staying in community via these virtual (and drive-thru!) substitutes. You are forming a vibrant core from which a renewed, energized congregation will grow and flourish. Thank you for your faithfulness.

The rest of us, on the fringes of participation, are counting on you to keep that faith and trust alive.

I apologize to those with whom I have failed to check in and keep my commitments. I used to tell my parishioners who experienced dark nights of the soul that when a few of us could not pray, the rest of us were praying on their behalf. Thank you for your prayers.

I see now that my living situation is itself isolating. The friends I found in my building early in my residence have all moved away. A month ago I asked my kids whether I should move or get a dog. "Don't get a dog!" they replied. 😊 They know me too well. Heeding daughter Rachel's request to relocate nearer to her, I began looking for a new place to live. By the grace of God and an amazing realtor, I will have bought, sold, and closed within a span of only 6 weeks. Though I know the "geographical cure" is a myth, I have hope and energy for this new chapter.

You have been my lifeline for almost seven years. The day I first visited St. Paul's, the Adult Class theme

was, “Welcoming the Stranger.” David Franzen asked me, “How have we done?” My verdict: A+ I was enveloped in love from the start, which has never failed, even when I tested it.

I will join another congregation in Raleigh, close to my new condo. I thank Pastor Anderson for his steadfastness and unyielding support. (And what would we do without his online shopping skills?!) I thank the congregational leaders who have taken us through challenging times. I thank the caregivers who reach out within our walls and the outreach teams that move us beyond our walls. I thank the elders who inspired me. I thank my many friends, for everything.

I close with this Celtic benediction:

*Deep peace of the shining star to you,
Deep peace of the running wave to you,
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you,
Deep joy of the leaping fire to you,
Deep peace of the Son of Peace to you.*

Heartfelt gratitude,

Deborah Steed

222 Glenwood Ave, Unit 210
Raleigh NC 27603
cell: (new) 919-949-7353

COVID-19 & Stephen Ministry

by Nan Treul



Our team of Stephen Ministers is always ready to reach out a helping hand and listening ear when a member or friend of St. Paul's is experiencing a difficult time. In addition to situations

such as grieving the loss of a loved one, battling a chronic illness, going through a divorce or separation, facing the loss of a job, or a myriad of other stressors, we now find ourselves in the midst of a pandemic!

Our lives have changed in ways unimaginable a few months ago, impacting people in various ways. Some people are experiencing added stress such as living alone, being socially isolated in their homes due to age, physical disabilities, lack of family living nearby and other situations causing anxiety.

If you or someone you know is finding it hard to cope with this new reality, we encourage you to consider asking for one of our Stephen Ministers to walk beside you. You may talk to Pastor Scott, Kim Hoke, or Nan Treul about having a Stephen Minister. We welcome the opportunity to talk with you and answer any questions.

New Baby Born!

A new baby boy, Adrian was born to Sophia Bessias and Lee Dolat (and sister, Zoe). Adrian was born on Tuesday, August 18, 2020 and was 9 lb. 13 oz. Proud grandparents include Tina and Pakis Bessias and Great-Grandmother is Barbara Anderson.

Wedding Congratulations!

Kara York and Andrew Newcombe were united in Holy Matrimony on Saturday, August 15, 2020 at St. Bernard Catholic Church in Keene, NH. Kara is the daughter of Steve and Dawn York. Kara and Andrew are re-locating to Durham, as Andrew begins his studies at Duke Law School. Steve and Dawn are very glad to have Kara back in Durham!

Memorials Received

We thank the following persons who have submitted memorials in memory of those designated:

In memory of Sonja Bock by:

Tony and Karen Oliver, Bahama
Judith Browning, Durham
Marion Louise S. Beasley, Durham
Marcia and Dean Redman, Chapel Hill
John and Linda Foreman, Durham

In memory of Nancy Clendaniel by:

Marcia and Dean Redman, Chapel Hill

In memory of Jim Sackett by:

Barbara Anderson, Durham
Marcia and Dean Redman, Chapel Hill
Nan Truel, Chapel Hill
Lois Boynton, Chapel Hill
Rachel Harter and Richard Havill, Chapel Hill
John and Linda Foreman, Durham
Lawrence and Carole Ostrowski, Hurdle Mills
Phillip and Sally Hart, Durham
Karl and Otilie Freundt, Durham
B. Williams Ellertson, Durham
George M. Davis, Durham
Richard Clendaniel, Durham
Jeffry and Joanne Kreps, Hudson, OH
Ted and Diana Dominick, Durham
The Rev. Kathy Harper, Durham
John Dyke, Garner
Larry and Phyllis Jenkins, Durham
Bonnie Cooper, Durham

St. Paul's Lutheran Church, ELCA
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Durham, NC 27705-5731

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Pivoting during a Pandemic

by Amanda Anderson

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.”

According to Romans 8:28, God is calling me to find the opportunity in being unemployed during a pandemic. That’s a tall order, God. Luckily, I have a lot of experience in this arena as I was unemployed for 16 months in 2018-2019. During that time, I felt the urge to try something new. I toyed with the idea of writing a blog, but wasn’t sure what to write about and was too overwhelmed to step out of my comfort zone.

But this time around, I knew exactly what I wanted to do! I’m starting a frugal living and financial wellness blog called Single on a Shoestring, which is geared toward single women earning a modest income. I’ve lived on a shoestring budget my entire adult life. Because of that, I’ve acquired a lot of dollar-saving knowledge and am excited to share this with others.

www.SingleonaShoestring.com launches Labor Day weekend. Please check it out, subscribe to my email list and follow my journey on social media.

Here’s to Saving Jingle & Thriving Single!

Dear St. Paul’s,

I hope that you’re coping well during this extraordinary time. COVID-19 has turned our lives upside down, and it’s understandable that anyone’s focus would turn inward at such a moment. But your concerns clearly extend beyond your immediately family and your own well-being. In fact, you’ve been thinking about vulnerable men, women and children. I know because we’ve just received a \$6,077.76 gift from you, and I couldn’t be more grateful.

At UMD (Urban Ministries of Durham), we’re inspired by the way clients, volunteers, donors, and staff are helping us to weather the COVID-19 storm

and, in the end, emerge stronger. Thanks to your support, we’re continuing to provide food, shelter and a future to neighbors in need – even during a pandemic. That’s pretty amazing.

*Joe Daly, Director of Development
Urban Ministries of Durham*

St. Paul’s Readers

Everyone is welcome to join the Zoom discussion of Where the Crawdads Sing, by Delia Owens, on Thursday, September 17, at 3:00 pm. There will also be a discussion of which books to read for next year. Please send suggestions for 2021 books to Barb Shade, bjshade11@gmail.com, ahead of time.

The book for October is Liturgy of the Ordinary, by Tish Harrison Warren.

Happy 102
Birthday to
Arloa
Bittikofer,
Aug 29, 2020

