



roclamation

The Ministry of Reconciliation

By Tim McNutt, *Pastor*

DECEMBER 2015

Volume 2, Issue 20

The ancient scriptures record many reasons for the Christmas entrance of Jesus into this world. The major reason is to repair the separation between God and humanity.

All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to Himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation. (English Standard Version, 2 Corinthians 5:18)

Ever since ‘the fall’ humanity has been separate from God and from each other. Jesus came that where there was division and separation there might be reconciliation.

Recently my wife Amy and I were in Atlanta for the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL.) Basically, it was 5 days of theology nerds and geeks listening to various lectures on all sorts of theological subjects. But fair readers, theology is more than fancy definitions in books, it’s meant to be an understanding of how God calls us to live with Him and each other. Theology is more than ideas on paper, it’s about actual relationships – how we get along with each other.

You see, even if our theology is 100% accurate and orthodox, if we can’t along with the person in the seat next to us, our theology is 100% in-accurate and very un-orthodox. Jesus came to break down the walls of pride separating us from others and to bring about reconciliation.

In our pride we exclude one another. In His love we include one another.

This Christmas season, I would like for you to ponder the power of empathy in your life. After all, the scriptures call us to ***love your neighbor as yourself*** (James 2:8.) Empathy means that we take time to consider the emotions and experiences of others but from within our own selves. Empathy is not meant to take place in a neutral vacuum but in light of our own existence. In other words, as Christians we are called to treat others the way that we would want to be treated. This is the main reason Jesus came into this world, to bring us together with God and each other.

As you consider what Jesus has accomplished in you, is there room for God’s grace in others? If the old truly passes away in your life on a daily basis do you allow others to be the new creation God calls them to be? It’s not up to us to limit who God gifts with His mercy and grace, but instead to be ambassadors for Christ as part of the embracing, inclusionary work of God.

AMEN.



From the desk of the Congregational President

Paul Mehrkam

December is going to be an exceptionally busy month during Advent. Church activities include Acappella Vocal Ensemble, Painting Party, and Children's Christmas Program. The Angel Tree will provide us another opportunity to reach out and bring the spirit of Christmas to those in need. Don't forget the Christmas Eve candle light services.

Thank you to everyone who attended November's Semi-annual Voter's Meeting. I envision that the installation of officers will take place during a Sunday worship service in January. We are still looking for someone to fill the Building and Grounds position. Contact myself or Pastor if you are interested in serving as Building and Grounds.

I am looking forward to the 2016 New Year which will be my second year as Council President. The Sunday School building will be completed. Our next steps will be improving the main church building. I am hopeful that we can start holding town hall sessions during February and March to discuss potential projects with the congregation.

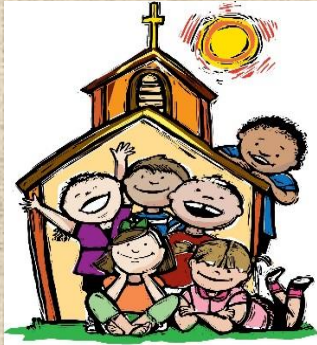
We have been blessed with a donation of pew seating from Faith Bible Church in Mechanicsville. These new pews will complement our existing wooden pews and eliminate much of the folded metal chairs in the sanctuary.

Dear Lord Heavenly God, Thank You for the gift of eternal life paid for, through the death and resurrection of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Also, thank you for the gifts of time, money, and donations from our church members, and Faith Bible Church. May You continue to guide our hearts to be charitable to others as well. Amen.



Sunday School

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.”

Greeting 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, “Baby Jesus, We Love You,” which will be performed by the children at the 10:30 worship service on December 13, 2015. There will be no Saturday practice for the program this year as we will do all our practicing during our normal Sunday school time on Sundays.

After the service 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 and we hope all will attend. At the beginning of the Christmas season this a great way to support our children’s enthusiasm for the true meaning and importance of Christmas.

Lastly, the Sunday school children have been learning about Abraham for the past several weeks in class and we have asked them to bring in can food/pantry items for the food pantry at Trinity Lutheran Church. Just as Abraham provided a blessing to the whole world through the bloodline of Jesus Christ, we want the children to help be a blessing to others in need. There will be a basket in the front hallway for the children to place the items they bring in. We will be collecting items until December 13th when we have the Christmas program.

Also please note that there will be no Sunday School classes on Sunday, December 20th or 28th. Classes will resume on Sunday, January 3rd.

ROOTED

Colossians 2:6-7

Like any other December, we have a lot going on and we are so excited! Here are the dates for what's ahead of us!

Sunday, December 13: Shopping after Christmas Program

Friday, December 18: Lock-In

Saturday, December 19: Angel Tree Distribution

Rooted will continue meeting on Wednesdays at 6:30pm. Parents, please confirm your contact information with Jack McNutt so that he can effectively contact you about cancellations or delays if needed.

For December we will be focusing on why Jesus was sent to Earth and how we should be welcoming Him not just to Earth, but into every aspect of our lives. This will be leading into our series of digging behind the new name and theme of the youth group.

We are also looking for donations for the new Senior High / Youth Group room for when the modular are done. We are looking for a coffee table, bookshelf, and a couple couches. These do not need to be pristine, top notch pieces of furniture. Worn is ok!

We have a lot planned for next year! We are locking in some dates and can't wait to start getting out into the community! If you have any ideas for us to volunteer our time for, please let me know! We are looking for more fundraisers, too!

Jack McNutt
Leader of ROOTED Youth Ministries
JMcNutt.StPauls@Gmail.com | 724-674-8673



Mission and Ministry

*Come and join us for
an evening of Painting*

**December 11, 2015
7pm-10pm**

St Paul's Lutheran Church

37707 New Market Turner Rd
Mechanicsville, MD 20659

Cost \$35.00 per person

Includes: Painting essentials, drinks, & snacks

Picture: Peace Dove

For more information and to make a reservation:

Contact: Kelly Gray 301.904.6681

Gene Bostwick 240.415.5936

Payment due night of event



**St. Paul's Angel Tree is in
the Narthex and ready for you
to pick a child's name and
bless them this Christmas!**

**Gifts are due back on
Dec. 13th.**

Let Christmas Begin

A blue-toned illustration of a nativity scene. In the foreground, silhouettes of three camels, a shepherd with a staff, and the Virgin Mary with the infant Jesus in a manger are visible. In the background, a town is nestled in a valley under a starry night sky. A bright star shines from the right, casting rays across the scene. The entire illustration is framed within a large oval.

A CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Presented By

The Acappella Vocal Ensemble

Sunday, December 6, 2015

**3:00 pm @ St. Paul's Lutheran
Church**

37707 New Market Turner Rd, Mechanicsville, MD 20659

Holiday treats and drinks will be served after the performance.

The Acappella Vocal Ensemble is a Chamber Ensemble of 18-24 singers from the tri-county region of Southern Maryland dedicated to the performance of exceptional choral music. The ensemble mission is to offer opportunities to singers from high schools, colleges, community choral groups and church choirs, to learn and participate in the art of choral singing.

A VIEW FROM THE PEW –

Some thoughts on sharing the Good News--- “but, wait what is that noise?”

By Jim Shewbridge

I grew up listening to the Metropolitan Opera presented by Longines-Wittnauer; the Swiss watch company on Saturday afternoon. Around Christmas, they always presented Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker Ballet which I learned to enjoy and love. By the way, I listened to other music influenced by visits to my grandmother in Louisiana and her regular home guests, a young Jerry Lee Lewis (sometimes with his cousin evangelist Jimmy Swaggart) and the great Singing Railroad Brakeman Jimmie Rodgers. Several years ago, June and I went to see the Nutcracker. With great anticipation, I settled into my seat as the grand orchestra and ballet dancers began to perform--- but wait, what is that noise? I concentrated and realized I was hearing the dancers' ballet slippers shuffling and sliding on the stage floor as they performed. Try as I could, I was not able to separate the noise from their slippers from the dance and thus my **anticipated** enjoyment was ruined! You never hear the noise in videos or recordings.

Why did I let the distraction ruin my experience? I think it was because I did not take into account the reality of human interplay with the music, dance and stage floor. Have you ever had a ***misconception of a perception***? This may sound like a convoluted thought, but think about your faith and your daily walk with God. With faith in Christ, we **perceive** and know our salvation is through His work (Eph 2: 8-9) and our **perception** is complete in His saving grace.

Now think about how **others perceive** our faith and how we live our lives. Do they see us, as we perceive ourselves or how we live daily? Others perception of our faith is formed from watching our actions and perhaps not so much as what we profess. Living our faith is critical as we attempt to reach those who do not know Christ. We are called to witness as prompted by the Holy Spirit and who knows whom God will direct to you. Recall Jesus' words in John 4:35b- ***“I tell you open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.”*** My brothers and sisters in Christ, the fields surround us now. During this blessed Christmas season let us live a worthy life in Christ and share the world's new born hope with others. Finally, consider ---

Each day, what you are will determine what you see.

Moreover, what you see will determine what you do.

Always in Jesus name



An Advent reflection on Genesis 2:18, 21-22, 4:1 and Luke 2:7

By June Shewbridge

When preparing for Advent I often think of these passages and how Eve and Mary's circumstances were similar. Both women would give birth to their first born in unfamiliar surroundings with only their husbands to comfort them.

Eve, as the first woman, had no mother or grandmother to guide her through the birth process, she had no sister or aunt to turn to with questions on what to expect.

Mary left her mother, grandmother, sisters, and aunts behind as she traveled with her husband to Bethlehem to register and be taxed. She too, would have no woman to guide her.

Eve, having been banished from the beauty of the garden would give birth to her children in a harsh and unfamiliar environment outside of the garden.

Mary traveling far from her home would give birth to her first born in the harsh environment of a stable.

Both would be filled with an overwhelming joy as they held their newborn for the first time.

Eve would nurture, guide, and love her children to adulthood.

Mary would nurture, guide and love her child as he matured into adulthood.

Ultimately, both women would know the unspeakable pain endured because of the death of a son.











Two different women...two different times and circumstances ...each bound together by God who would touch them in different ways but with the same loving care.

Eve.....Mother of us all.

Mary...Mother of Jesus, our Savior.



December 2015

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Anniversary 30 – Tom & Barbara Youngson		1	2	3	4	5
			Advent Service 7 pm 	Girl Scout Mtg 5:30 pm Choir Practice 6 pm		 Wedding of Jill Schumaker & Bruce Hayden here @ 11 am
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Service Times: 8:00 and 10:30 am Acolytes 8:00 Danielle Hoffman 10:30 Jacob Gray			Advent Service 7 pm 	Girl Scout Mtg 5:30 pm Council Meeting 6:30 pm	Design Painting here @ 7pm 	 ANGEL TREE Gifts are due tomorrow 12/13
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Service Times: 8:00 and 10:30 am <u>Christmas Program @ 10:30 svc.</u> Immediately following Church Luncheon. Acolytes 8:00 Emily Maack 10:30 Garrett Wiggen			Advent Service 7 pm 	Girl Scout Mtg 5:30 pm Choir Practice 6 pm	ROOTED LOCK – IN	Angel Tree Distribution  Wedding of Betty Ann Downs & Elvis Wathen here @ 4 pm
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Service Times: 8:00 and 10:30 am 9 LESSONS & CAROLS @ 10:30 svc. Acolytes 8:00 Dylan Otte 10:30 Kaleh Wollin No Sunday School				Christmas Eve Services: 12 pm-light lunch after 7 pm 9 pm  Wedding of Lyndsey Trowbridge & Andrew Parker here @ 2:30 pm	Christmas Day Svc. 10:30 am 	
27	28	29	30	31	Birthdays	
Service Times: 8:00 and 10:30 am Acolytes 8:00 Emily Maack 10:30 Nicole Williams No Sunday School				New Year's Eve 	3–Rick Lacey 4–Dylan Otte 5–Elizabeth Bostwick 5–Danielle Hoffman 6–Jack Guntow 7–Melva Fuchs	9–Lucy Price 9–Paul Mehrkam 9–Karen Wiggen 11–Chris Curtis 15–Sherri Maack



Proclamation

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

37707 New Market Turner Road

Mechanicsville, MD 20659-3075

Sunday Services 8:00 and 10:30 am

Adult Classes 9:10 am

Wednesday Bible Study & Communion 6:30 pm

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

Dates to remember:

Wednesday ADVENT SERVICES - @ 6:30 PM December 2, 9, 16, & 23

Sunday, December 6 – Christmas Concert by Acappella Vocal Ensemble @ 3 pm

St. Paul's will be providing drinks after the program, please bring a holiday snack to share!

Friday, December 11 –DESIGN & PAINTING @ St. Paul's 7 – 10 pm

Sunday, December 13

Sunday School Christmas Program – 10:30 am service

Christmas Church Luncheon following service. Please bring a main dish and side or dessert to share.

Angel Tree gifts – are due on 12/13

Food Pantry collection – due 12/13. (non-perishable foods)

Friday, December 18 – ROOTED Lock In

Saturday, December 19 – Angel Tree distribution

Sunday, December 20 – 9 LESSONS & CAROLS @10:30 service

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES – 12 PM with light lunch after, 7 pm, & 9 pm – Thurs., Dec. 24

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE – 10:30 AM – Fri., December 25