

St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Smithfield

139 Craig's Meadow Road

East Stroudsburg PA 18301

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Web Site: stpaulscommunitychurch.com

Facebook: St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Smithfield

February 2022  **St. Paul's Call**



Everyone is welcome to join us for worship

St. Paul's Mission Statement

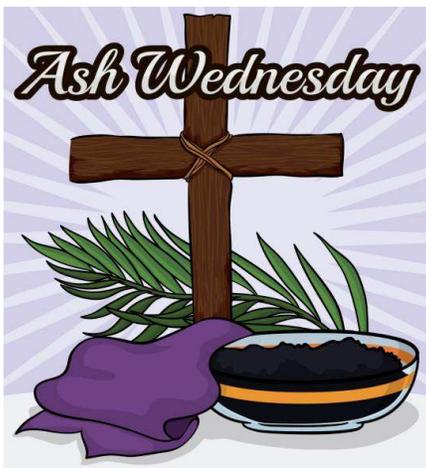
We are a community of faith called to share the good news of Jesus as our model of life.

We seek spiritual maturity through worship, learning and serving.

We invite and welcome all who desire to share this journey of faith active in love.

**LIVE STREAMING IS AVAILABLE ON FACEBOOK FOR THE 10:00AM
SUNDAY SERVICE.**

Go direct to Facebook or Web Site home page and select FB tab



Greetings from Worship and Music!

Communion – Beginning in February we will be starting with a continuous communion in the front of the church. Communion assistants will be needed. A sign up sheet is on the bulletin board if you can help at either the early or late service.

Farewell Luncheon – Sunday, February 19th will be Pastor Thomas's last day with us. We will be having a combined service at 10am followed by a luncheon in Fellowship Hall. Please join us as we thank Pastor Thomas and his lovely wife Nancy for his service and assistance

this past year and a half. Worship & Music would like to especially thank him for his efforts in raising funds for our new organ, helping to return to in person worship, changing bulletin styles, introducing the new ELW liturgy and livestreaming the service, conducting Bible studies and for his memorable sermons each week as well as the selfless hours that he gave ministering to those members and their families that were experiencing illness, the death of a loved one, change of life, baptism or catechism and other life events. We have been blessed to have had him be a part of our church lives. From everyone on the Worship & Music committee, Thank you for your faithful service!

New Pastor - Pastor Deb Staniszewski will be assuming the role of pastor at St. Paul's on February 20th. Her first service will be on **February 22nd for Ash Wednesday at 7pm**. Please give her a warm welcome as she joins our church family and leads us in worship. We encourage you to reach out to your friends and neighbors and invite them to one of the many special programs or Sunday services. We are looking forward to a bright future! If you are in need of pastoral care, please call the office at 570-223-9422. Below is a list of some upcoming services as we head into the Season of Lent.

Spiritual Formation Programs for Lent

Wednesday Evenings 6pm Soup 7:15 Program

March 1 – Visio Divina (Seeing with the “eyes” of the heart)

March 8 – Meta (Loving Kindness Meditation)

March 15 – Taize (Contemplative Service)

March 22 – Lectio Divina (Listening to scripture with our hearts)

March 29 – Holden Evening Prayer (Service of Song)

Holy Week

April 2 - Palm Sunday – 8:30 & 10AM

April 6 - Maundy Thursday – 7pm Agape Feast with Light Mediterranean Fare

April 7 - Good Friday – 7pm

April 9 - Easter – 8:30 & 10AM

Lenten Soup Suppers – Sign-up sheets for Lenten Soup suppers are on the board. If you are able to provide soup, bread & butter or a beverage, please sign up. Services will be on Wednesday evenings in March at 6pm in Fellowship Hall. Show us your soup skills, people!

Altar Flowers and Bulletins - Commemorate a special date or celebrate a special person with flower arrangements for the altar. Bulletin sponsorships are also available. Check out the bulletin board to sign-up. Checks may be given to the Church Secretary or Dana Strohl.

Service Assistants – Thank you to all those who signed up for the month. Sign-up sheets for February and March are on the bulletin board. Your help as an acolyte, greeter, lay reader or communion assistant is most appreciated.

Celebration Hall Building Fund – For those who would like to make a donation to offset the mortgage on this wonderful building that serves as a gathering place for the local community please make your check payable to St. Paul's Lutheran Church and write on the note Mortgage Reduction.

Share Your Ideas – We welcome your ideas for worship, music and activities that Worship and Music could introduce in the New Year to spread the word of St. Paul's to the community and make your church life more meaningful.

Yours in Christ,
Worship & Music

**If you are interested in joining the
Altar Guild contact Nancy Fritz we can use your help.**

Celebration Hall Building Fund Chart



A Parting Message from Our Interim Pastor

Dear friends,

Nineteen months ago, I accepted a contract to serve as your interim pastor. I indicated that I would serve until a new pastor arrived. I am leaving on Sunday, February 20. Pastor Deb Staniszewski begins work as pastor on Ash Wednesday, February 22.

It has been a pleasure to share the journey of faith with you. Even in difficult moments, in hospitals, or at the grave, we were blessed with the presence of the Holy Spirit. I'll remember baptisms, funerals, coffee hours, Bible studies, singing, times with young volunteers in the food pantry, sharing of clothing, the Friday Ladies, visits with Margo, praying, preaching, celebrating the meal, fellowship, and friendship. I'll recall, with a smile, a communion class with Madeline, a seven-year-old! We laughed and cried, mourned, danced, ate too much cake, and welcomed new people. We acquired a new Allen Organ, formatted user-friendly bulletins, and redesigned the 8:30 worship service. We have survived cold weather and spent time celebrating the company of bees and animals. Our lives have been knit in a fabric of faithful service to Jesus Christ. I thank you. Nancy adds her thanks, also.

We have bonded and grown in wonderful ways while experiencing mercy, grace, joy, and love! The Lord has blessed us in more ways than we know. God is with us.

If we take a snapshot of the congregation in February 2020 and hold it alongside today, we see a church we recognize and a church transformed through the grace of God. The responses we acted upon due to the pandemic and all the measures initiated before and after my arrival — indeed, all that we have accomplished together — took optimism and dedication, which you generously shared. Three years ago, none of us could have predicted ZOOM meetings or the live streaming of worship. I am sure; just as we have done these things, with strong leadership from the Church Council, so, too, they will continue for the worship and praise of the Living Lord.

We may not have accomplished everything I had hoped for, but we accomplished much together. It was my covenant with this congregation and the Northeast Pennsylvania Synod that I would serve you in a particular way, including preparing you for your next pastor. You have called a new pastor, so it is my time to exit.

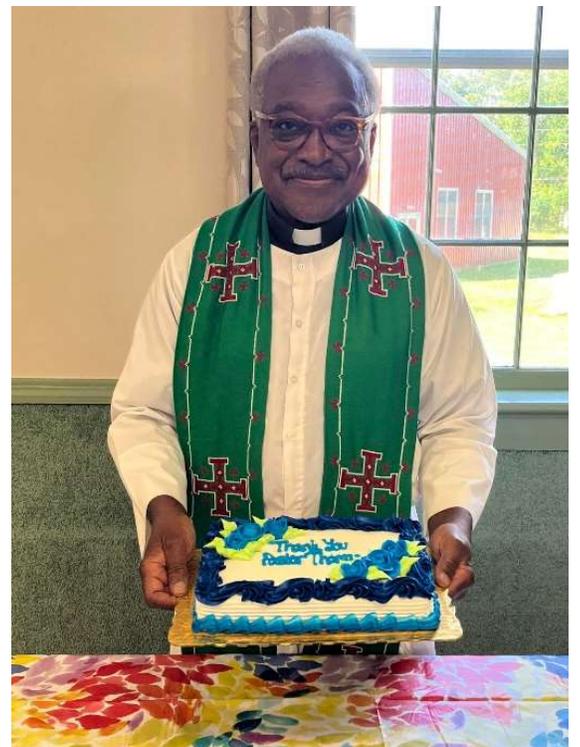
On February 20 our interim ends. I'll step down that day, and Pastor Deb will step in. My love and thanks to you. After that day, we will continue to pray for each other and ever be the friends we are. Give Pastor Deb the same support and encouragement you gave to me.

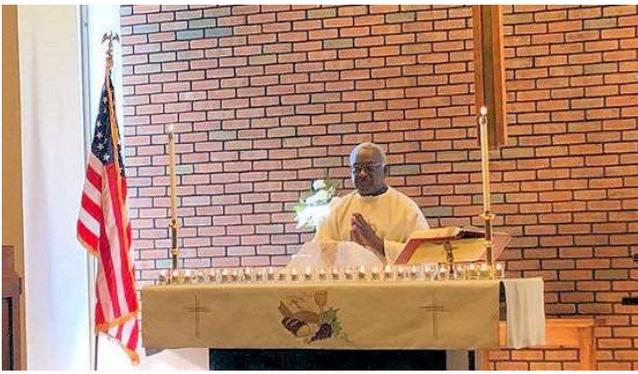
I wish you all the best in this new season that you are about to begin. May you grow in faith, hope, and love, worshipping the Lord with your whole heart, mind, body, and soul and giving thanks to God.

Pastor Thomas



Let the
MEMORIES
Begin!





FOOD PANTRY FEBRUARY

THURSDAY the 9th and 23rd

9:30am – 12:00 noon

Contact Wanda with any questions.



COFFEE HOUR

Looking for people to host (helpers available)
Sundays after the 11:00am Service



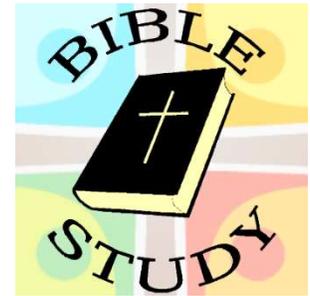
CELEBRATION HALL RENTALS

Please call the office for phone number
or see Sonji Patrick for information.



FRIDAY LADIES

Every Friday 9:00am – 12:00 noon



Every Tuesday from 11:30am –
12:30 pm.

Homemade Honey

You can purchase from
Laura or Alan
During Sunday coffee hour.





SYNOD NEWS



NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD, ELCA

FriEDENS: An Amazing Garden Story

A few weeks after the lockdown in the spring of 2020, I called a neighbor in town who had a garden in her front yard. It's Shartlesville, and the PA Dutch are used to their yards looking *just so,* so I knew this was a brave woman who loved gardening vegetables more than public opinion. I also knew she didn't have room for pumpkins in her small yard, so I called and proposed we plant some viney crops up on our church property. She agreed and even had the seeds, gardening skills, and ideas, so after consultation with council, the garden was born. We sent our crop to the neighboring UCC congregation's food pantry, and with the excess had physically- distant free produce giveaways.

In 2021, we expanded the garden by half, to about 50 by 75 feet. We watered each plant via a recycled gallon milk jug with a pinprick in the bottom. The plants were happy, but our backs were not. It took 45 minutes to an hour to water all the jugs, which we did nearly every day because the garden is in full sun. The black plastic we used for weed suppression became a slip-and-slide while we irrigated.

In 2022, we were able to install a drip irrigation system that did not require filling milk jugs and weed suppression fabric that was not slippery. The fabric required using a blow torch to make holes for planting but will be able to be used for multiple years. The irrigation only required turning on the spigot and letting it run for several hours, which was a true God-send because we had some unexpected health issues on the garden team that limited our volunteer force! It was an extraordinarily dry summer, so the grant came just in time.

This past summer we had 21 people volunteer in the garden, took produce to 5 food pantries or senior centers, including Cafe Esperanza in Reading, and welcomed 29 people into the garden at a joint VBS. Not only are we feeding our neighbors with free, fresh, pesticide-free produce, but we are also getting to know our neighbors, developing new connections in the congregation among volunteers, teaching children about food insecurity and the joy of gardening, and passing on agricultural wisdom.

Submitted by Pastor Inge Williams

SYNOD
ASSEMBLY



2023

GOING
BEYOND
DEATH
TO LIFE

JUNE
1-3

What's happening at Kalahari?

- Plenaries full of important decisions like the next Vice President of the Synod and the next Secretary.
- Small group breakouts with important and timely topics like small rural ministry, growing young, anti-racism, innovative worship, and more...
- Vibrant worship featuring Agape (David Scherer) and spoken word poet, Joe Davis.
- Free time activities and gatherings.
- And an incredible guest preacher for our festival worship (announcement coming soon.)

*We're hard at work planning
this incredible event!*



SO LET'S GET BACK TOGETHER,
RECHARGE, WORSHIP, AND ENGAGE IN
THE BUSINESS OF CHRIST'S CHURCH.

FEBRUARY 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Praise Team 6:30pm	2 Choir 6:30pm	3 Friday Ladies 9:00am – 12:00noon	4
5 <i>5th Sunday after Epiphany</i> 8:30 & 10:00am Pastor Thomas	6	7 Bible Study 11:30 – 12:30pm	8	9 Food Pantry 9:30am – 12:00noon Choir 6:30pm	10 Friday Ladies 9:00am – 12:00noon	11
12 <i>6th Sunday after Epiphany</i> 8:30 & 10:00am Pastor Thomas	13	14 Bible Study 11:30 – 12:30pm	15 Praise Team 6:30pm	16 Choir 6:30pm	17 Friday Ladies 9:00 – 12:00noon	18
19 Transfiguration of Our Lord/ Last Sunday after Epiphany Combined 10:00am service Pastor Thomas Luncheon following Service	20	21 Bible Study 11:30 – 12:30pm	22 Ash Wednesday 7:00pm Service Pastor Deb Staniszewski	23 Food Pantry 9:30am – 12:00noon Choir 6:30pm	24 Friday Ladies 9:00 – 12:00noon	25
26 First Sunday in Lent 8:30am 10:00am Contemporary Service w/ Praise team	27	28 Bible Study 11:30am – 12:30pm				