

Cross Connections



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

November 2019

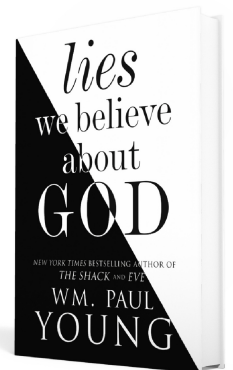


Welcome Wm. Paul Young For an Evening of Conversation

On Tuesday, November 19 at 7:00 pm, we welcome Wm. Paul Young to St. Paul's. He is the author of the bestselling novel *The Shack* and the *NY Times* bestsellers *Cross Roads* and *Eve*. His new book, *Lies we believe about GOD* is a conversational exploration of the wrong-headed ideas we sometimes have and share about God.

Paul Young has been called a heretic for the ways he vividly portrays God's love through his novels. In this deeply personal, nonfiction book, he shares twenty-eight commonly and sometimes seemingly innocuous things we say about God. Paul exposes these as lies that keep us from having a full, loving relationship with our Creator.

With personal anecdotes and sharing the compassion readers felt from the "Papa" portrayed in *The Shack* – soon to be a major film starring Sam Worthington and Octavia Spencer – Paul encourages readers to think anew about important issues including sin, religion, hell, politics, identity, creation, human rights, and helping us discover God's deep and abiding love.



The Rev. Scott M. Anderson, Pastor

Susan Esposito, Parish Administrator & Editor

Jacqueline Nappi, Minister of Music

Amanda Stoen, Preschool Director

Anna Carter, Vicar

The Rev. Ali Tranvik, Associate Pastor, Duke Lutherans

Jackie Fryt, Bookkeeper

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

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From the Pastor...

As I think back on the last few weeks, I realized just how busy the fall is at St. Paul's. Between programming getting in full swing, Planting Hope, Oktoberfest, Trunk or Treat, ordination and the usual issues around a fellowship with aging people and small children; we are a very busy place.

In addition, Advent is right around the corner and we begin planning a new church year. Just to let you know we are staying in Now the Feast and Celebration until the first Sunday in Advent when we will make the switch to Setting 4. We may make some minor changes to things we have been doing for a while. So watch your bulletins.

In this month of Thanksgiving, I want to give thanks for all who answer God's call to serve. I want to share a word of thanks to Martha Dahl and all who have been helping in the kitchen. Meals on Wednesday evenings have been a joy and blessing and I so appreciate the fellowship time we have on those evenings. The nurturing committee is doing a fine job of reaching out and staying in contact with members. They offer great support and I give thanks for them. Betty Hinshaw continues to do outstanding work with our children in Sunday School and our numbers of children continues to grow. If any of you are able and willing to help with Sunday School, please talk to Betty. Our children need you.

Our new bookkeeper started on October 21st. Jackie Fryt is here four days per week and will be taking over some of the responsibilities of financial secretary and treasurer. We are still looking for people to answer God's call to serve in these roles as our official officers of the church. Much thanks needs to go out to our current finance team. They have served faithfully for over 20 years. Thanks to Larry Jenkins, Larry Grovenstein, and Jayne Baum and the whole finance committee.

My prayer for St. Paul's is that we will continue to strive to do God's work in Durham. Please pray for this congregation and give thanks for all who serve.

Pastor Scott

From the Vicar...

Do you ever find yourself singing the words or humming the melody of a hymn? This very thing occurs on a regular basis for me. I don't always know why a phrase or tune comes to mind, but I welcome it just the same. Several times a year, the first stanza of "For All the Saints" pops in my head and before I know it I am singing "For all the saints who from their

labors rest, who thee by faith before the world confessed..." This is one of my favorite hymns. Full of rich imagery, it helps us understand what we mean when we say each week in the Apostles' Creed, "I believe in the communion of saints."

The communion of saints are *all* of God's children – those who have died, those who are living, and those who are yet to be. God, who transcends time and place, gathers all of God's children into one beautiful union as this stanza from "For All the Saints" describes. "Oh, blest communion fellowship divine, we feebly struggle, they in glory shine; yet all are one in thee for all are thine. Alleluia! Alleluia! In the mystery of God's grace we are forever united in love to God and to all of our brothers and sisters in all times and in all places.

All Saints Sunday is November 3 this year and on that day, we will give God thanks for those in our congregational family who have died in the past twelve months. This year we will read aloud nine names and light nine candles as we remember them. These beloved children of God have joined the Church Triumphant. In the sure and certain hope of the resurrection we will join them someday. Until then, we remain united with all of God's people in the communion of saints.

Whether or not the lyrics and tune of "For All the Saints" pop into your head from time to time throughout the coming year, may we always hold in our hearts and minds the union we share with all of God's people.

Your sister in the communion,
Vicar Anna

Together at the Table

by Christina Nesslage
Duke Lutherans

Last month, a group of ten Duke Lutherans traveled together to Wilmington for our annual fall retreat. The focus of our retreat was continuation of a question we've been asking all fall: what life together, particularly around the *table*, means for us.

To explore this question, we spent a lot of time at the table of the small cottages we stayed at. We prepared all of our meals together and ate together. We snacked a lot in between, and we even baked fresh bread.

There is a verse in a Communion hymn that goes: "As the grains of wheat once scattered on the hill have been gathered into one to become the bread, so may all your people from all the ends of earth be gathered into

one in you” (ELW 465). I see our faith community a lot like the line of this hymn. Despite our varying backgrounds, gifts, and experiences, we are gathered into “one bread” when we come to the table. Just as the water, yeast, and flour of the bread we baked come together to become one bread, so too do we.

Duke Lutherans represent many different homes across the country and the globe, different academic programs, and even different churches and denominations. But the togetherness we experience at the table is truly a foretaste of the feast to come. The table teaches us about letting go of a do-it-yourself attitude that pervades our world on campus and remembering that we need one another.

It’s easy to overlook eating as a site of fellowship and belonging because many of us often do it on our own, running from one class to the next. But, when we gather at the table, we remember what it means to be gathered into one. Even when we do it imperfectly, it’s still worth showing up.

On the Sunday morning of the retreat, we had Communion on the beach. It was a bright and clear morning. The waves were rolling in and the sky was a perfect blue. We sat on the beach, in the sand, and worshiped together. We sang and prayed, and ended with Communion, eating the very bread that we had baked the night before. This culmination of the weekend was all the more powerful and moving given we’d been gathered around the table all weekend, trying to live into what it meant to “become bread.”

Preschool Pitter Patter



by Amanda Stoen

This month we are celebrating our incredible teachers! Teaching preschool is a lot of fun and exhausting at the same time. We refer to our teachers as brain builders since a

child’s brain undergoes an amazing period of development from birth to age three. The development of the brain is influenced by many factors, including a child’s relationships, experiences and environment. At our preschool our brain builders create a safe and connected classroom that allows children to learn. We spark their curiosity by asking open-ended questions. We introduce new concepts and we follow their lead with personal interests. At St. Paul’s we believe that play is a child’s work and that through play, children learn a lot about themselves and the world they live in.

Each classroom has teachers to work with our

children, a lead and an assistant. They work closely together to provide a warm safe environment for a positive first experience away from home. They look at play through the lens of the child, incorporating fine motor skills, pre-literacy and math skills and many others throughout the entire morning. Recently on our field trip to the pumpkin patch and farm, we discussed what new animals we saw, how many cows there were, the many different sizes of the pumpkins and how the animals reacted to the rain. Our teachers use everyday experiences to engage children to become lifelong learners.

Each month we will continue to celebrate 10 years as a preschool at St. Paul’s. Here is a little reflection from one of our current preschool families.

Our family is so grateful for the nurturing and stimulating environment our daughter has found at St. Paul’s. She talks with such enthusiasm about her teachers as well as the interesting things she does and learns about each day. The staff and director at St. Paul’s have created a preschool that promotes social-emotional and intellectual development in ways that are incredibly age-appropriate, and we feel lucky as parents to be part of the warm community there.

– The Scholl Family

CCG: Continuing Conversations Group

We invite the congregation to attend Sunday School on November 10, 17, and 24: our friend Imam Abdul Waheed will be talking about his Islamic faith and the ways that sacred texts are used in Muslim worship. This is a return visit by Imam Waheed, who made a popular presentation at St. Paul’s in February 2018. Imam Waheed has a ministry of outreach to other faith communities in Durham; he teaches a course in inter-faith dialogue at OLLI, where he is on the Board of Advisors. We think you’ll find him a warm and engaging speaker, and one from whom we have a lot to learn.

Looking ahead, CCG is planning a special weekend in February 2020 when Professor James Thomas, of Southern Seminary, will visit St. Paul’s. We’ll be exploring with him the recent ELCA “Declaration to People of African Descent.” Copies of this statement are on the table near our video screen. We invite you to pick up a copy – or to download the PDF version from the ELCA website. As we reflect on the 400th anniversary of the start of trans-Atlantic trade of enslaved people from Africa, this is a time for

sorrow, deep reflection, and resolve to build a better future for all of God's children. The ELCA Church Council calls on us to a time of study and racial justice work. Walk with us as we prayerfully endeavor to answer that call.

CCG meets at 6:00 on the first Tuesday of each month; we welcome your presence, your thoughts, and your support.

Social Ministry Updates

by Pat Casper

¿Habla español? Kathy Daniels, an experienced Spanish teacher, is offering classes to teach you. Currently, she is unable to provide the classes so we are meeting to review and practice lessons learned.

Several of St. Paul's members participated in the gleaning at Louisburg farm.

In November, you will have an opportunity to meet and discuss Bishop Eaton's reflections on the churchwide 2019 assembly. How will this impact our congregation – our lives.

In the mailbag...

Many, Many Thanks

I want to express my sincere gratitude to Pastor Scott and each and every member of my St. Paul's Church Family for your prayers, visits, messages, cards, flowers, and all your love during my surgery and ongoing recuperation. I strongly believe your well wishes and positive energy are as significant to my healing as medical science.

I began this journey several weeks ago with an extra measure of assurance of God's power, since we had just completed the Book of Job in Bible Study just days before my surgery! I felt very inspired by the strength of our discussions during class and Job's ultimate triumphant faith in God. May we continue such faith through our love, prayers, and care for each other.

*In Christ,
Marilyn Bell-Hawley*

* * * * *

Thank you to everyone in the congregation who donated to the kitties at the Independent Animal Rescue. You really made a difference in the lives of these cats. Because of all of your donations and other people like you in the community, we collected almost 100 pounds of cat/kitten food, over 200 cans of wet

food, and over 100 cat toys! We also received a variety of other things! Every time I went to check the box it was like Christmas, seeing all the donations really made my heart warm. I always have loved cats and all animals; so helping rescue cats for my Silver Award made me very happy. I will be able to get my Girl Scout silver award which is the second highest award for Girl Scouts, thanks to all you wonderful people. Again, thank you so much for all of your donations.

From Anastasia Smith

God's Work – Our Hands

by Dean and Marcia Redman

Gleaning is the gathering of grain or other harvested material left behind by reapers. The Israelites were commanded to allow the poor to follow behind the reapers and pick up leftover spears of grain and fallen grapes. In this way, the Law of Moses provided food for the poor, orphans and widows. "When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest ... Leave them for the poor. I am the LORD your God" (Leviticus 19:9-10)



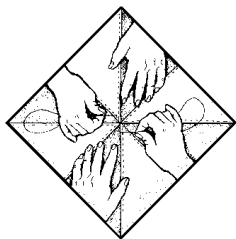
For we are God's fellow workers.
You are God's field, God's building.
1 Corinthians 3:9, ESV

On a cool, sunny Saturday morning in October we traveled to Louisburg to volunteer to glean a sweet potato field. We had never done it before and did not know what to expect. To our surprise, the farmer had graciously planted a whole field of sweet potatoes just for donating to the poor. There was no digging in the dirt to find a meager few sweet potatoes. The field had been plowed and the sweet potatoes were totally visible for the gathering. Young and old were participating in the venture as we worked down each row picking up the potatoes and bagging them. Two hours later there were mountains of bagged sweet potatoes ready for donating. They estimated that about 225,000 servings of sweet potatoes will be shared with hungry people.

Witnessing the efforts of so many willing to give up a Saturday morning to help feed the hungry was heartwarming! To see the young girl scouts, brownies, cub scouts, church youth groups and multi member families participating to help those less fortunate was a blessing we will treasure from the day.

Tongue & Thimble Quilts

The Tongue & Thimble quilting ministry is an opportunity for members of St. Paul's to answer God's call to love and serve our neighbors in need, and to provide a tangible symbol of God's love and compassion. This year, they have created 80 comforter quilts and 20 NICU blankets which will be distributed between the Cancer Unit at Duke, Neonatal Unit at Chapel Hill, the Durham Exchange Club Industries, as well as Project Night Night. Throughout the year, these women of St. Paul's sew quilts, blankets, and other items to help those in need. Most fabric is donated, however, occasionally we must make purchases to have enough supplies, especially batting for the quilts. Please consider a donation to help (checks to St. Paul's noted for "quilts"). Sewers are always welcome! Tongue and Thimble meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at 10:30 am downstairs at church. Contact Audrey Busch or Lois Kinzie for more information.



Project Night Night

Many of you were in the church on October 13 to see the beautiful quilts made by our wonderful Tongue and Thimble group of ladies. Not only are these all works of art and appreciated by each congregant sitting in the pews, but unbeknown to some of you these beautiful works of art are treasured by many children throughout Durham County as they are donated to a nationwide charity called "Project Night Night." This prize-winning charity (featured on the Today show) puts one of these quilts along with a new book and a new stuffed animal into a special canvas Project Night Night carrier bag. The bag is in turn placed in the arms of a child who is presently living in one of our areas homeless shelter (including Families Moving Forward, a part of Durham Urban Ministries). This gift helps during the hard transition from home to a shelter and remains with the child as their very own as he or she transition to other living arrangements. I wish you all could see the excitement and joy of these children and their parents when presented with such a gift; they can hardly believe someone would make such a beautiful quilt that they get to keep. Being in a strange environment under difficult circumstances is a frightening experience for these children and a little kindness and caring goes a long way. While I

personally thank our wonderful, talented ladies of Tongue and Thimble, I hope each of you will do the same as their handiwork is now being cherished by those whose life circumstances have made a shelter their home.

Barbara Dahl
Regional Coordinator,
Project Night Night

Welcome by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism

On Sunday, October 20, we welcomed the following infants and children:

At 8:30 am, **Camryn Grace Forringer**, daughter of Mary and Dan Forringer. Camryn was born on September 16, 2019 in Durham.

At 11:00 am, **Holden Alexander Loftus**, son of Dina Marie and John Loftus Jr. Holden was born on April 7, 2019 in Roanoke, VA. Sponsors are Sarah Basile and Charles Craddock; **Kallie Beth Loftus**, daughter of Dina Marie and John Loftus Jr. Kallie was born on September 6, 2011 in Roanoke, VA. Sponsors are Laura Reed and Gina Diederich; **Lilliana Marie Loftus**, daughter of Dina Marie and John Loftus Jr. Lilliana was born on September 11, 2009 in Roanoke, VA. Sponsors are Peggy Finck and Chris Finck.

Prayers of Sympathy

Our sympathy to the family and friends of **James Richmond** (husband of Alice Richmond), who died on Monday, October 21. Jim's funeral was held on Saturday, October 26 at 2:00 pm at St. Paul's, with interment in the memorial garden. Donations in Jim's memory may be made to St. Paul's Memorials or a place of your choosing.

Ordination

On Sunday, October 27, at 4:00 pm, **Sharon Kay Schulze** was ordained to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament at St. Paul's. The Rev. Dr. Timothy Smith, bishop of the NC Synod, presiding; the Rev. Amy Smith Bradley, preaching. Sharon will serve as mission developer of South Durham Connections and Parkwood United Methodist Church as Coordinator of the Parktown Food Hub.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church, ELCA
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Caring is Always in Season

Have you noticed the “tree” that has been “planted” on the wall in the narthex area? Created by members of St. Paul’s Nurturing Committee, the tree is designed to be a visible sign of the many ways the St. Paul’s family uses the gifts of the Holy Spirit – connecting, serving, visiting, praying, learning, listening, comforting, encouraging, inviting, sharing, studying, and giving. Through reflection with Pastor and assistance from members of the Stewardship Committee it is hoped that the 12 caring-act categories are all-encompassing.

As a way to make these thoughtful and caring acts visible, you are invited to fill out a tag, which is available, write a simple description of the act, put the date on the reverse side, and hang the tag on the tree. Each of the 12 categories are within the center of the colorful flowers at the base of the caring tree.

“Together in Jesus Christ we are free by grace to live faithfully witness boldly and serve joyfully” (The mission statement of the ELCA).

The Founding Fathers of Hayti

The true story of three men who came together in 1900 and established Durham as America’s Black Wall Street and uplifted its African American Hayti community – November 9, 2019, 8:00 pm at Hayti Heritage Center, 804 Fayetteville Street, Durham. Visit www.africanamericanarts.org or 919-627-8372 for more information.

Katherine Circle, WELCA

All women are invited to the Katherine Circle gathering on Tuesday, November 12 at 10:00 am in Trinity Hall. Pat Casper will present the devotion and Vicar Anna Carter will present the program.

Young In Spirit Events



The November event for Young In Spirit will be a visit to the Nasher Museum on Duke Campus. Date is **Wednesday, November 13**. We will leave from St. Paul’s at 9:30 am by bus

to be at the Museum for a tour by a Docent at 10:00 am. The cost is \$10 per person. Lunch will follow the tour at the Nasher Museum Café. There is a sign-up sheet on the receptionist desk in the office. Contact Sue Dahl for more information.

The December Trip for the Young In Spirit is to see the musical “Away in the Basement” at the Temple Theater in Sanford, NC. Date is **Saturday, Dec 14**. The play begins at 2 pm and travel time is one hour. Lunch will be determined later. Cost is \$24 per person. We will leave from St. Paul’s at 10:45 am. Sign up on the receptionist desk by Nov 20. For more information, contact Jim Shoaf.

St. Paul’s Readers

All are welcome to join in the discussion of Dear Even Hansen, by Val Emmich, on Thursday, November 21, at 3:00 pm in the library. The book selection for December is Becoming, by Michelle Obama.

Wednesday Night Suppers

Nov 6 and 20 will be the November Wednesday night suppers.

The menu for Nov 6 is our famous Taco and Salad Bar! Lots of fixings to create a great meal! The menu for Nov 20th is Chicken Pot Pie –

wholesome and hearty! If anyone would like to help with either meal, either in preparation for making a side or dessert, please contact Martha Dahl. See you both evenings, meals begin at 6:00 pm.



Report of Task Team on Damascus House Property Sale

On March 3, the congregation voted “to enter into negotiations with Wildflower Cottage for the sale of Damascus House by August of 2021. The terms to be negotiated by a task team appointed by the congregation council and the Wildflower Cottage Board.” At its next meeting, the council appointed the task team: Tina Bessias, Ted Dominick, Kim Hoke, and Mike Mauriello; Linda Foreman and Pastor Anderson were to serve in ex officio capacity. Wildflower Cottage also appointed a negotiating team at this time.

Going into negotiations, the team expected Wildflower to be interested in the house and surrounding acre that had been appraised at \$411,000. We investigated setback requirements and discussed ways to configure the rest of the property to create lots that could be put on the market.

Our first joint meeting with the Wildflower team took place April 17. There the daycare expressed interest in buying both Damascus House and the property behind it. We then ordered a survey that would identify boundaries for two deep lots. It was peak real estate season in a hot market, however; it took weeks to get a surveyor to come out to the property and more weeks to get the report. We did receive it in July, and, as expected, it showed a buildable lot 75’ wide that would meet setback requirements from the corner of the Damascus House porch.

The St. Paul’s task team met with a representative of the Finance Committee on Aug 20 to review all the data and discuss our offer to Wildflower Cottage. Mike Mauriello, who is a realtor, spoke about two opposing forces at work in the local real estate market: the upward trend in values and the prospect of recession. After some discussion, we set asking prices for several different configurations of the property, and I conveyed those prices in a memo to Wildflower.

The joint task team reconvened on Oct 3 and Wildflower Cottage made an offer on the whole property. After negotiation, we all agreed to the following terms:

- purchase price of \$485,000
- earnest money of \$10,000
- a letter of commitment from their bank
- closing by end of December 2020 (they expect to close in the summer but want to have a buffer, particularly for the permitting process)

They have delivered a contract and a check for earnest money, and they are working on the commitment letter. If the congregation of St. Paul’s accepts the offer, Wildflower will

- . give their architect and site engineer the go-ahead to complete the design and apply for permits
- . close on the property
- . do the renovation
- . move out of St. Paul’s and into the house and property

The Wildflower team noted that it's important in their financial planning to minimize the period of owning and renovating the property while still paying rent to St. Paul's. That period will begin at closing. Time estimates from the architect, engineer, and builder suggest that everything could be ready for renovation to begin in summer 2020 and finish in December or January. The deadline for closing, however, is set at December 2020 to allow for unexpected delays in the design and permitting phase.

At its October 21 meeting, the congregation council reviewed the task team's process and the offer. It also received input from the finance team. The decision was to move forward and schedule a congregational meeting on Nov. 17. If the congregation approves, the contract will be signed and check deposited in an escrow account.

For more information, please see any member of the council or the task team.

From the Planting Hope Team: Congregation Purpose Statement

With help from congregation members submitting numerous responses to the following statements: “The work of God at St. Paul’s is ...” and ‘An important thing about St. Paul’s is ...’, the Planting Hope Team was able to develop the following congregation Purpose Statement:

Our Purpose: “To inspire and engage one another to do what is just, show love, and fulfill God’s word.”

This statement stems from St. Paul’s efforts to participate in a visioning process to help better define who we are as a congregation. In essence, the development process included reflection on the Planting Hope Team training sessions, consideration of the Vitality Survey results and review of the congregation responses. The team identified common words/themes from the congregation responses (a broader community, fellowship, worship, witness, action for social justice) and in particular noted the concept of fulfilling what the Lord requires as stated in Micah 6, 8.

The team discussed the differences between purpose, mission and vision statements, and subsequently took into consideration St. Paul’s current mission statement which responds well to the “how” we accomplish our purpose: Purpose Statement - articulates *why* you do what you do. Mission Statement – *how* you accomplish your purpose.

Our Mission: “The Missions of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church as part of the family of God is to share God in Christ with the world by equipping one another through worship, learning, witness, service and support.”

Taken together, our Purpose and Mission statements help to better define who we are as a congregation and will help keep our ministries centered and focused. The power of purpose can be summed up in the following quote: “When a congregation knows its purpose and lives its purpose, it creates a permission giving environment in the congregation.”

The Planting Hope process began in May of 2018 and was expected to take at least 18 months. The Planting Hope Team has participated in several training sessions and most recently met in September of 2019 for a session on developing congregation Core Values and Guiding Principles which is the next phase of the process.

Planting Hope Team: Pastor Scott Anderson, Tina Bessias, Lisa Lewis, Betty Hinshaw, Ellen Lavery, George Seiz

Other Churches Participating with their own team: St. Philip, Raleigh; Christus Victor, Durham; Our Redeemer, Greenville, NC

Planting Hope Process Timeline

January 2018 - Annual council retreat. How can we be more collaborative as a congregation. (

January/February 2018 – Decision to participate in a visioning process called Planting Hope offered by the Triangle Conference of the NC synod.

May 5, 2018 - The first team training session was held at St. Paul's.

Training: Congregational Life Cycle, Triangle of relationships, Vitality Survey, Bible study, Team purpose statement.

June 3, 2018 - Commissioning of Planting Hope Team at both services.

July/August 2018 - Vitality survey being filled out by congregation.

August 2018 - Planting Hope Team and Council Bible Study (Acts)

October 6, 2018 - Second team training session held at St. Paul's

Training: Preparation for developing a congregation Purpose Statement.

March 17 and 19, 2019 – Presentation and discussion of Vitality Survey results.

One sentence summary of survey results - "We are a sustainable congregation and with a little work can easily become both a vibrant and sustainable congregation. Total attendance for the sessions was about 45 members.

May 2019 - "Plan B" to develop a purpose statement formulated after retreat process cancelled.

Congregation will be asked to provide responses to two questions and also submit photos of something important about St. Paul's.

June/July 2019 - Congregation submits responses and photos as requested.

August 16, 2019 - Purpose statement developed by Planting Hope Team submitted to Council, in context with St. Paul's current Mission Statement.

August 25, 2019 - Pastor preached about new purpose statement (Isaiah) and told congregation they would be hearing more about our purpose statement and mission statement in the near future.

September 28, 2019 - Team training session in Greenville, NC.

Training: Celebration of Purpose Statements. Discussion on developing Core Values and Guiding Principles.

Near future timeline:

November 2019 - Solicit Core Values from congregation . Turn in forms on or before Dec. 1, 2019

December 2019 - Planting Hope Team in conjunction with the Council will develop 4 -6 Core Values and Guiding Principles utilizing congregation input.

February 8, 2020 - Training session for Planting Hope Team