

Cross Connections



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

May 2018

LET'S CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS IN JULY!

Between now and the end of June, information about the ELCA Good Gifts program will be made available to the congregation by the Social Ministry Committee. ELCA Good Gifts is a Lutheran church-wide program which offers farm animals and more to help those who need a hand up but not a hand out. Our particular focus for this project is farm animals.

All members of the congregation will be invited to make donations through the month of June. Donations can be made in the form of cash or checks made



ANIMALS



ELCA GOOD GIFTS

to St. Paul's, but designated for ELCA Good Gifts program. At the end of June, a selection of one or more animals will be made, depending upon the total amounts received. As an example, donations in the following amounts provide these animals:

\$10	Piglet	\$50	Goat	\$250	Fish Farm
\$10	Chicks	\$100	pair of Goats	\$1000	Oxen and plow
\$15	Rooster	\$500	Cow	\$715	Family Farm

When you read a catalog or bulletin insert and talk with a committee member, you can tell that person which animal you like best. Maybe that will be one we choose.

Here's hoping we have a MOO..rry Christmas in July.

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

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

pastor@stpaulsdurham.org
admin@stpaulsdurham.org
music@stpaulsdurham.org
preschool@stpaulsdurham.org
vicar@stpaulsdurham.org
ahw22@duke.edu
crhugg@charter.net

Church Office Phone: 919-489-3214 * Fax: 919-490-1088 * Website: www.stpaulsdurham.org

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

From the Pastor...

Let's pray: Divine Architect of justice and love, give us courage to clothe our prayers in action. You call us to love as we are loved; daring to act with courage. United in Christ we follow your way, serving the least of these. We pray in Jesus name. Amen.

That was my morning prayer from the Moravian Daily Texts, which I use most mornings as part of my devotions. I thought it was an appropriate way to begin this article. I want to share some of the actions of our congregation council and affirm the faithful way they make decisions for God's church, St. Paul's.

During our meeting last evening, we decided to move forward with contracting Lynchburg Stained Glass to do the repairs on the side windows in the sanctuary. The council and in particular, President, George Seiz, worked diligently to find options and secure additional bid on the work of repairing and/or replacing the windows. We were able to secure a second bid on the work from another stained glass company and we had some conversation with other contractors. It was determined that it was desirable to maintain our current windows and both our bids were similar. However, Lynchburg suggested maintenance for all the windows and the council felt it was best to repair all the windows, rather than just the broken ones.

We are awaiting a time frame for the work to begin. We have between \$23,000 and \$33,000 for this work and if additional contributions come in we will use them to replace the amount that will be taken from the Capital Funds. Thank you for your support of this effort.



Council also is continuing to work on what to do with the Damascus property. We continue to explore possibilities with Wildflower Cottage, explore other options and determine what use could be made with the undeveloped lots. As we continue to work on these issues, we are very pleased to continue the current lease agreement with Wildflower for the use of Whitesell Hall. We will be increasing the lease payment and extending the lease for an additional 12 months through the end of 2019.

Many of you remember Sarah Hinlicky, now Sarah Hinlicky Wilson. She was our vicar some years ago and will soon be moving to Japan with Global Missions to be a minister in Central Tokyo and her husband Andrew will be teaching at Japan Lutheran College and Seminary. She has asked for our prayer and support and council approved participating with

her and suggested Global Missions dollars given during VBS and Sunday School offering would be used to support her ministry. We will be receiving information from Global Missions of the ELCA but our hope is we can offer up to \$500 annually to support her and Andrew as they spread God's word in Japan.

We continue to work on Planting Hope, a visioning program for our congregation, so look to the council report for more information concerning this program.

God gives us courage to move forward in justice, peace and love, trusting that with God to guide us all things are possible.

Peace,
Pastor Scott

From the Vicar...

On May 20, we will be celebrating Pentecost, the birthday of the Church when the holy Spirit descended on the apostles as tongues of flame. They began to preach and everyone heard the Gospel message in their own native language – Arabs, Greeks, Jews, and more (see Acts 2:1-21). This radical birth story of the Church is a powerful story of inclusion, one that says that God's love in Jesus' birth, ministry, death, and resurrection is for all people everywhere.

In August 1930 in Marion, Indiana, a white man was shot and later died in the hospital. When he died, an angry mob took his bloody shirt and raised it up on the flagpole as a battle cry. Three young black men – Thomas Shipp (aged 19), Abram Smith (aged 18), and James Cameron (aged 16) – had been arrested on suspicion of having something to do with the shooting. The mob broke into the jail and lynched both Thomas Shipp and Abram Smith. The details of how the mob went about this lynching are both horrific and inhumane, to say the least. Young James Cameron narrowly escaped the lynching actions of the murderous mob. The town photographer took a picture of the event, and the image went viral (for 1930s standards) selling reproductions across the country.

A few years passed, and Abel Meeropol a white, Jewish public school teacher from the Bronx, comes across the picture and is haunted by it. He ends up writing a powerful protest poem under the pseudonym Lewis Allan about the picture that turns the horror of lynching back upon itself. Although the poem never mentions the term lynching, the imagery of "black bodies swinging in the summer breeze" is unmistakable; the poem is a protest against lynching.

He later sets the poem to music and calls it “Strange Fruit.” The song is first introduced to a young jazz singer named Billie Holiday by a nightclub owner, and from that point forward, she performs the song at the close of every live performance, beginning in 1939.

Just a few years ago, film makers made a brief 12-minute film about the story behind the famous song, celebrating 75 years since its initial performance. With the Continuing Conversations Group, Pastor Scott and I will lead a viewing and discussion of this challenging but important film for everyone to join following the 11:00 worship service on Pentecost Sunday (May 20) in Trinity Hall.

Although this conversation may be difficult at times for us to have, we feel it is an important conversation in which to engage. According to a 2015 Pew Research study, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is the second least racially diverse denomination in the nation (second only to the National Baptist Convention which is 99% African-American/Black) and the most “white” with 96% of members nationally identifying as Caucasian/European/American/White. As one of the least racially and ethnically diverse denominations in the nation, how can we claim to be a place where all people from all kinds of backgrounds are welcome (as we see in the story of Pentecost from Acts 2) when that is not reflected in who shows up to worship on Sunday?

We are not claiming to start the conversation because the conversation has been ongoing for a long time, and we are not claiming to come to any resolutions that will automatically fix things in the ELCA. What we will be doing is joining in and continuing the often uncomfortable conversation that leads to reconciliation. We will confront the horrific past of these events, probe into modern equivalences, examine the theological framework that the film gives us focusing on the idea of “strange fruit,” and discuss potential action steps toward healing and reconciliation. The film itself can be disturbing and uncomfortable the first time it is watched (which I believe is the filmmakers’ intent), so we will post the video on St. Paul’s Facebook page beginning in May for you to watch on your own first before watching it with a large group on May 20. If you do not have a Facebook account, please email me, and I can send you a link to the film online. Please consider making it a point to join us in this conversation on May 20.

Love in Christ,
Vicar Adam

Who Is Our Neighbor?

by Ali Tranvik

As the academic year comes to a close, I give God thanks as I reflect on what has been an exciting, challenging, and joyful year with Duke Lutheran Campus Ministry. I am grateful for the ways God has been at work in and through us as we seek to create community and explore what it means to be a person of faith on campus and in the world today. A large part of that exploration has been centered around questions of neighborliness: “Who is our neighbor? What does it mean for Duke students to live as neighbors? What does it look like for us to get to know our neighbors – to be in real relationship with one another? What might it mean to engage meaningfully in our ‘neighborhood,’ both on and off campus?” Guided by these questions, we’ve hosted conversations with community leaders, brought in speakers to learn about the needs and concerns within our neighborhood (including affordable housing, homelessness, hunger, and food insecurity), and worked to live and love as neighbors – in church basement ESL classes, in medical clinics, and in the living rooms of newly-arrived refugee families.

Luther’s theology of vocation has been both challenging and helpful in guiding our understanding of what neighborliness is – and what it is not. Luther speaks of neighborliness not in terms of charity or volunteerism, but rather as *vocation*. Being a neighbor is not just something we *do*, it’s who we are. Neighborliness is not something we “go out and do” as an isolated event or only when we have the time, but a way of living that shapes *all* of our encounters, in *all* of the places we find ourselves, *all* of the time. Neighborliness is not rooted in a sense of obligation, but rather is our automatic and joyful response to God’s gift of grace freely given. Neighborliness is not guided by the question “how much is enough?” but by the question “**how can we not?**”

It is a gift to be in and build community with our Duke Lutherans students who come from so many different “neighborhoods” – from Phoenix to New York, Tanzania to Minnesota, China to Texas. And I am grateful for the many ways St. Paul’s supports these students and enriches this ministry. I ask for your continued prayers as we continue to be challenged by Luther’s theology and as we explore together that which we “cannot but do” as neighbors next year.

In Christ,
Vicar Ali

Council Updates

by George Seiz
 Congregation Council President

In the last two issues of the Cross Connections I have spoken about the program called Planting Hope, a visioning process which our congregation will be participating in. The Planting Hope team that will be receiving training has been established. Team members are: Pastor Scott Anderson, Betty Hinshaw, Ellen Lavery, Pam Taylor, and council members Tina Bessias, Lisa Lewis, and George Seiz. It is anticipated there will be five training sessions over an eighteen month period with the first session scheduled for May 5, 2018. More detail about congregation involvement



Council Notes

and how information will be disseminated to the congregation will be provided after the first training session.

The council continues to look at and discuss projects identified for calendar year 2018 and beyond. They include:

1. *Visioning Process* – Planting Hope initiative started
2. *Improve Communication within the congregation* – identify and implement ways to improve communication between committees, staff and congregation
3. *Next steps for the Damascus Property*
4. *Strengthen St. Paul's involvement in our Community*
5. *Begin developing a multi-year plan for our facilities* (inventory and evaluate conditions)
6. *Safety Planning*
7. *Begin preparation for 100 year Anniversary*
8. *Trinity Hall Stage Improvements* (more specifically sound and lighting)

The council realizes this is a rather ambitious list, and subsequently will need the help and support of the congregation to address these projects to move them forward. Please prayerfully consider how you might help.

Preschool Pitter Patter

by Amanda Stoen

THANK YOU for your generous donation of books for Book Harvest. Together, the church and preschool collected over 230 books. We had a visitor from Book Harvest come and talk with our 3s and 4s classes about what they do and how they support children in our community. There are so many benefits

to reading to young children including building a love of reading, increasing vocabulary and knowledge, bonding between children and adults and increasing creativity in all areas of development.

May is the last month of our school year before we break for summer. We have had a wonderful year and I enjoy watching our families get to know each other throughout the year as both parents and children form lasting friendships. We will send another class of children off to kindergarten, ready to learn more about the world.

Registration for summer camp and the 2018-19 school year has begun. Additional information can be picked up downstairs in the preschool area or can be downloaded from our website -

<http://stpaulspreschooldurham.weebly.com>. If you are interested or know of anyone who is, please contact me at the church or email: preschool@stpaulsdurham.org for more information.

Featured Congregation

Did you know that our congregation is a member of the Triangle Conference, one of the sixteen conferences that make up the North Carolina Synod of the ELCA? The Conference brings together the fourteen ELCA congregations and four Lutheran Campus Ministries in the Triangle for mutual support and cooperation and to work together as the face of



Lutheranism in our area. The congregations included in the Triangle Conference are: in Cary – Christ the King; in Chapel Hill – Holy Trinity; in Durham – Arbol de Vida, Christus Victor, Church of the Abiding Savior, Our Savior, and St. Paul's; in Fuquay Varina – Abiding Presence; in Garner – Lord of Life; and in Raleigh – Good Shepherd, Grace, Holy Trinity, Joy of Discovery, and St. Philip. Lutheran Campus Ministries in the Triangle serve UNC (Holy Trinity Chapel Hill), Duke (St. Paul), NC State (Holy Trinity Raleigh) and

NC Central (Church of the Abiding Savior).

Rostered leaders in the Triangle Area get together regularly to share how the Spirit is moving in their communities and to discern how local congregations can work together and support each other. Being part of the Triangle Conference gives us all the opportunity to get to know and be part of this larger Lutheran community. This month, we are highlighting the ministries of one of our Triangle congregations: **Good Shepherd Lutheran Church**, a mission outpost on the north side of Raleigh since 1983. They're a community trying to figure out how to follow Christ in their neighborhood, their city, and their world. Addressing hunger and homelessness, as well as inviting all of God's people into life-changing service, has been a focus of their ministry these last thirty plus years. They regularly partner with Families Together and Family Promise in an effort to curb temporary homelessness, and recently embarked on a letter-writing campaign for Lent to ask Congress to prioritize the needs of the hungry poor in this next fiscal budget. They consider themselves to be intentionally cross-generational, imperfect, and saved by grace.

Prayer for GSLC: Holy One, you call your servants together for the sake of the Gospel. Please continue to further the outreach ministries of our partners at Good Shepherd in North Raleigh, that they might continually give of themselves for the life of the world. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Planned Giving

This is one article in a series of topics about various types of planned giving. We will feature one topic each month in Cross Connections. To see the other articles in the series, check our website stpaulsdurham.org under Resources.

Part 1: Wills

Part 2: Charitable Gift Annuities

Part 3: IRAs

Part 4: Life Insurance

Part 5: Charitable Trusts

*This month we feature **Charitable Gift Annuities***

ARTICLE #2: Charitable Gift Annuity

[anonymously submitted] I have a charitable gift annuity from the ELCA Foundation that will benefit St. Paul's when I die.

I do not have a lot of monetary assets, so this type of gift is really a great way for me to ensure that

St. Paul's receives a gift upon my death. When I bought the annuity, I was able to count a large portion of that amount as a charitable gift. The annuity pays me a small amount every month which helps me with my budget in retirement. The ELCA Foundation sends me a statement every year because not all of that payment is taxable (some is nontaxable), which is another help.

I wish other people knew more about ELCA charitable gift annuities because it's such an easy way to provide for the church when I die.

Are you wanting to make a lasting gift to the church, but you still need income from your money today? A charitable gift annuity may be right for you. Here is how it works.

You transfer an asset to fund a Gift Annuity to a certain level. Then based on your age, you will receive a guaranteed payout for life. A portion of this payout each year will be eligible for a tax deduction and the original gift to fund the gift annuity is partially deductible.

Charitable Gift Annuities are great for people looking to guarantee income and often to increase the income stream from an asset. It is important to note that once you place an asset into the Gift Annuity that you cannot get it back, but you do get the income each year for life and the income is guaranteed.

Gift annuities can help avoid or significantly reduce capital gains taxes. St. Paul's will use the ELCA Foundation to manage annuities.

Charitable Gift Annuity Rates can be found at <http://acga-web.org/gift-annuity-rates>

For more information about Charitable Gift annuities, please contact a member of the Council or the Stewardship Committee. We have a contact from the ELCA Foundation who works with all the churches in the North Carolina Synod. You will be hearing more about this in the coming months.

THANK YOU!

In the mailbag...

St. Paul's Congregation,

Thank you for all the support while dealing with Kayla's passing. From doing the reception, sending cards, playing the music Kayla wanted, it was a beautiful service.

The family of Kayla Gilbert

St. Paul's Lutheran Church, ELCA
 1200 West Cornwallis Road
 Durham, NC 27705-5731

Nonprofit Org.
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Durham NC
 Permit No. 600

"Come on people now, Smile on your brother"

Celebrate the Ministries of Lutheran Services Carolinas in May

"Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor." - 1 Corinthians 10:24

Compassion is one of the core values that defines and directs the ministries of Lutheran Services Carolinas. Through smiles, words of encouragement, and support during difficult times, LSC is there to help thousands of our neighbors in need across North and South Carolina.

In 2017, LSC served more than 7,800 individuals and families including seniors and caregivers, children in foster care, those affected by natural disasters, refugees, families living in supportive housing, and adults with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.

This month, consider ways in which you can show compassion to the vulnerable populations within your own community. You could volunteer your time at a local LSC program or make a tax-deductible contribution. Checks can be made payable to Lutheran Services Carolinas and mailed to P.O. Box 947, Salisbury, NC 28145. Gifts also can be made securely online at LSCarolinas.net.

Thank you for partnering with LSC as we work together to bring compassion to all of God's children. For more information, visit LSCarolinas.net or call 1-800-HELPING.

THANKS!

WCPE (89.7 fm) and "theclassicalstation.org"
 Thank you so much to the many members who have willingly given of their resources in behalf of St. Paul's effort to collect gifts in support of WCPE 89.7 fm and its Sunday program, "Sing for Joy," which originates from St. Olaf's College in Northfield, Minnesota. St. Paul's has exceeded its goal of making a collective gift of \$1,000.00 to the station. For this support of the program, our congregation will continue to be mentioned Sunday mornings "on air" throughout another year.

Habitat For Humanity Honduras Trip

by Larry Grovenstein

Interested in learning about the recent Honduras trip I enjoyed? We not only worked on a residential house, but also we hiked to a mountain village, visited schools, a hospital, girls orphanage, infant to toddler orphanage, coffee farms, and an elder home. On Sunday, May 6, join me in Trinity Hall as I share pictures and discussion of the Honduras and the Habitat for Humanity trip. A light lunch will be available. I am really looking forward to sharing this experience with all of you and hope that you'll join me.

Young In Spirit Birthday Celebrations

Join us on Wed, May 9 at Kanki Japanese Steakhouse, 3504 Mt. Moriah Rd (919-401-6908), to celebrate summer and all birthdays at our last gathering until Fall. Please arrive at Kanki promptly at 11:30 am for reserved seating. Guests are very welcome, just let Marilyn Hawley know in order to update the reservation. As we did last year, please donate your "Birthday gifts" to the Youth Gathering.

St. Paul's Readers

Join the St. Paul's book group when we next meet on Thursday, May 17, at 4:00 pm in St. Paul's library to discuss Lincoln in the Bardo, by George Saunders. The group decided to continue to meet through the summer months and the book selection for June is Before We Were Yours, by Lisa Wingate. Questions can be directed to Barb Shade or Vicar Adam.

Katherine Circle of the WELCA

The next meeting of the Katherine Circle will be held on Tuesday, May 8th at 10:00 am. Barb Shade will be doing the devotion. This is the last meeting until September and we will be doing an indoor picnic. All women are invited.