

Cross Connections



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

November 2018

LET'S CELEBRATE!

A year ago, churches around the world were celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, and Martin Luther, as the catalyst of the whole shebang, was getting a lot of attention. Luther was everywhere! But this year, in the 501st anniversary of the Reformation, Luther is feeling a little forgotten. He's not the center of attention anymore. He's not making the op-ed page or headlining at ecumenical gatherings.

So here at St. Paul's, we're throwing Luther a 535th birthday party in honor of his November 10, 1483 birthday. On **Wednesday, November 7, 6:00 PM** at the first Wednesday Night Supper of the month, we will celebrate with cake, trivia, Luther coloring books, and games. And in the spirit of Luther's beloved abundant grace, there will be abundant prizes. Perhaps Luther and Katie themselves will make an appearance! So join us to celebrate our namesake, share a meal with friends, and go home with a present endorsed by the greatest Reformer of them all!



Looking ahead... by Jacqueline Nappi **Christmas Concert & Sing-a-long**

Soprano, Jessica Cates, and myself will be performing Christmas music for soprano and piano and sing-a-long carols on Sunday, December 23rd at 4:00 pm in the Sanctuary. Please join us for some beautiful Holiday music and favorite Christmas carols – the more voices, the merrier!

Music on Christmas Eve

4:00 pm Children's Chime Choir
7:00 pm Laudate Handbells and Adult Choir
10:00 pm Special Soloist

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

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

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

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

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

From the Pastor...

Last month I ran through a very typical couple of days in the life of the parish staff at St. Paul's. I have to admit, I struggled with whether to do that because we all are busy people and I didn't want to sound overburdened. I have appreciated the comments from parishioners and am glad some found this information enlightening.

As I sat down to write something for November's newsletter, the congregation council, finance and stewardship are in the midst of budget planning and commitment season. That's frankly a stressful time around any church. We are not a business that can count on a regular stream of revenue from a product or service. We do not just rely on faith to pay the bills either.

God calls us to live in the midst of a world in which God provides abundantly for us. We are a people that for the most part are able to manage our finances well and support God's mission and ministry in this place. However, for the past several years we have fallen a little short and are using up our savings at a rate that is difficult to sustain. I pray God will guide us as we move forward in ministry. St. Paul's is a vibrant congregation that cares for, loves one another, and is a generous community partner. We are also a congregation that is reflective of the trends in mainline denominational congregations across the country. We are aging and right now we are maintaining membership levels, although some leave and new folks come and it balances. Our giving has remained fairly constant for the past 6 years while our budget and spending have increased. We still maintain a large mortgage from the renovations ten years ago. The renovations provided the fellowship hall, elevator, stained glass in the sanctuary, new offices, commercial kitchen, renovated classrooms and so much more. In addition, we acquired the property next door and the Damascus House. All of this came at a cost. The council, with the help of stewardship and finance will be looking at ways to increase giving so that we can reduce the debt, sustain and increase our activities.

I call on you to prayerfully consider a special gift in the coming months that would aid us in making up for the \$45,000 we used from our reserve funds to balance this year's budget.

May God bless St. Paul's and guide us to continue to serve our community.

Pastor Scott

From the Vicar...

"Vote! Vote! Vote!" – Everyone everywhere
"After a person has been justified by faith, a true living faith becomes 'active in love' (Galatians 5:6)" –
The Formula of Concord

If you've had any contact with the world lately, you've probably been told to vote. Everyone everywhere is telling us to go to the polls, and even the ELCA has a get-out-the-vote initiative, ELCA votes. But unlike the billboard on I-40 or your especially civic-minded friend, the ELCA votes campaign provides theological reasons behind the never-ending push to vote.

Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, in her vision of the ELCA, says that we are church for the sake of the world. We as the church are not meant to be insular, caring only about our own survival. We are meant to be a church that engages with the world and seeks justice and mercy on behalf of *all* people. Our affirmation of baptism calls us to "serve all people, following the example of our Lord Jesus," and to "strive for justice and peace in all the earth."

In a representative democracy like ours, we have the ability to serve people and strive for justice through influencing public policy with our ballots. As Christians, this is not just an ability, but a responsibility. We are responsible for our neighbor's well-being and, because we live in a representative democracy where voting carries such power and disenfranchisement such dire consequences, we are also responsible for our neighbor's ability to vote. As Luther said, God does not need our good works, but our neighbor does!

In the Large Catechism, Luther reminds us that the petition in the Lord's Prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread," refers to much more than a slice of toast. Daily bread is everything that preserves and sustains our life in this world, from the fields and migrant workers that grow our food to the roofs over our heads to the police on our streets to the international trade agreements that bring us our cars and coffee. Our local, state, and national governments are part of this petition, too. Lutheran theological tradition teaches that governments ought to be a "means through which God works to restrain evil, preserve creation and build a more peaceful and just social order in a sinful world" (from ELCA votes literature). We pray for these institutions, and our prayer becomes action when we use our ballots to build a more peaceful and just social order.

Some of you have asked me what I like to do when I'm not vicar-ing: one of my favorite things to do around election time is to research candidates and propositions. Clergy (and clergy-in-training!) can't advocate for specific candidates, but I would love to sit down with you and talk through the people and issues on our ballot. There are also great nonpartisan resources at www.NCVoterGuide.org and www.lwvnc.org/ (the League of Women Voters – not just for women!). When we study the issues through the lens of our faith and cast our prayerful ballots, we are not just doing our civic duty; we are making our faith active in love.

Our Story. Durham's Story. God's Story.

by Pastor Ali Tranvik

How do our story, Durham's story, and God's story connect? How does our faith relate to the place that we live? These are just a couple of the questions that 16 members of the Duke Lutherans community explored last month on the Durham Pilgrimage of Pain and Hope. The pilgrimage, hosted by DurhamCares and the Duke Center for Reconciliation, was a weekend-long local immersion experience that brought together Duke students, members of St. Paul's, and members of Grace to learn the stories of both pain and hope that have shaped the Durham community. The pilgrimage



Above, members of the Duke Lutherans community stop at a Pauli Murray mural as part of the Durham Pilgrimage. Learn more about this Civil Rights activist, women's rights activist, lawyer, writer, Episcopal priest, and Durham native at www.paulimurrayproject.org.

included stops at Stagville Plantation, the Hayti Heritage Center, Re-City, the Durham History Hub, NC Mutual, and the Latino Credit Union, among others. Along the way, we heard the stories of neighbors who have shaped this city, including Virginia Williams of the 1957 Royal Ice Cream Sit-In, Elder Blackfeather of the Occaneechi community, and Pastor Herbert Davis of the Nehemiah Christian Center. As we learned about Durham's story, we also explored the places of pain and hope in our own stories through conversation, reflection, prayer, and scriptural study.

So how *do* our story, Durham's story, and God's story connect? I'm not sure we came away with answers. That, perhaps, is the fruit of a much longer, ongoing pilgrimage. But if you ask those of us who participated in last month's journey, I'd imagine we'd have a story or two to tell....

Duke Lutherans Receives Peeler Casey Grant



Duke Lutherans is excited to announce that it has been chosen as a 2018-2019 recipient of a Peeler Casey grant through the North Carolina Synod. The \$17,500 grant will fund a project titled "Who is Our Neighbor?" Drawing on Luther's theology of neighborliness both on and off campus, as well as deepen the relationships between Duke students, members of supporting congregations, and neighbors throughout Durham. The grant will help facilitate vocational discernment opportunities, guest speakers and preachers, community meals, a book study, a spring break learning trip, and opportunities to share life together with members of Durham's newly-arrived refugee community. We are humbled to receive this grant and excited to share stories of how we encounter God in our neighbor as this project unfolds.



Duke Lutheran Spotlight

Welcome to "Duke Lutherans Spotlight," a bi-monthly feature story that spotlights a member of the Duke Lutherans community. This month, we hear from **Madison Burke**, Duke Lutherans' new Worship Leader. During her time as an

undergraduate at UNC-Chapel Hill, Madison studied Piano Performance and led worship with the Lutheran Campus Ministry program there. We warmly welcome Madison into the Duke Lutherans community ... even if she wears the wrong shade of blue!

What have you been up to after college?

After graduating in 2016, I served as a volunteer with the ELCA's Young Adults in Global Mission program, working in Mexico City at *El Centro de Estudios Ecuemencios* in their Land Rights Defense team and living with my two wonderful host dads. I saw God moving and working in innumerable ways during that year, and it is an experience I will always treasure. Since returning, I've started a job in domestic violence court advocacy at the Compass Center for Women and Families in Chapel Hill, where I also continue to see God despite the pain and suffering I witness daily in this work.

How did Lutheran Campus Ministry shape your college experience?

Some of my most significant friendships during my undergraduate years stemmed from campus ministry, and it served as my "home base" in many ways. During my senior year, I served as the Church Music intern, which helped expand my musical and professional development. Campus ministry was one of my primary support systems during college, and for that I am very grateful.

Having been with Duke Lutherans now for just a couple months, how would you describe its worship life?

The Sunday Evening Prayer service at Duke Lutherans is very intimate. I love the Holden Evening Prayer liturgy we use. As we sing the melodies of the Holden songs, you can feel people leaving their concerns at the door and coming together as a congregation.

Are you a Duke fan yet?

I will always bleed Carolina blue, but I admire Duke as a university and love being part of Duke Lutherans. I feel very welcome and comfortable there as a young professional, as Duke Lutherans is already a diverse community of various ages, backgrounds, and experiences.

What role does music play in your faith life?

I think God gave us music as another way to connect with the divine. Music also has the unique power to bring people together across cultural, linguistic, or social lines. I believe that we are all able to create

music, and that God delights in us doing so. I look forward to collaborating with more musicians in the Duke Lutherans community and exploring new musical styles in the weeks and months to come.

Preschool Pitter Patter



by Amanda Stoen

For four weeks this fall, our preschool and Durham Community Preschool partnered together to present a parent series on Conscious Discipline. We introduced the concepts of Conscious Discipline as well as

brain development. We then spent a session each on Safety, Connection and Problem Solving. We had strong parent attendance and good discussions about looking at children's (and our) behavior differently. The focus is on relationships and what we want to happen, rather than punishing and shaming children. With Conscious Discipline, children learn to develop an assertive voice and self-regulate, which are crucial in preparing children for kindergarten and beyond. We plan to create more parent sessions this spring.

In October, the fire truck visited the preschool to discuss fire safety with our three and four year old classes. Several classes learned about many kinds of apples and tasted several varieties to determine their favorite. They also learned about pumpkins and made delicious pumpkin pies!

Finally, we still have a few remaining spots for this fall in our PMO classes (10-23 months old). If you know of anyone who may be interested in our preschool, please contact me at the church or by email, preschool@stpaulsdurham.org for more information.

Crafts to Purchase

At the end of November and through early December there will be an opportunity to shop for Christmas gifts right here at our church. Items for sale will be pieces crafted by artisans from struggling communities around the world. "SERRV International is a nonprofit organization committed to fighting poverty through fair trade since 1949. We adhere to the fair trade standards as defined by the World Fair Trade Organization and endorsed by Fair Trade Federation."



Sharing Abundantly!

THANK YOU for your generosity and for sharing abundantly of your gifts of time and talents at St. Paul's.

THANK YOU to everyone who already turned in a Commitment Card on Consecration Sunday – or anytime before or after!!

If you have not yet returned your 2019 pledge, there is still time to do that. There are extra Stewardship materials on the ushers' table.

Got a question or comment? Would you like to join the Stewardship Committee? Or would you just like to talk about what Stewardship means to you? Just talk with any member of the committee. We thank you!

Alice Barnes	Curt Hahn
Linda Foreman	Deborah Steed
Tracey Dissel	Barbara Ellertson
Steven Mzyk	

Or, speak to Pastor Scott Anderson

I am off to Vietnam!

Many, many thanks to each of you for your love, generous donations to Habitat for Humanity International on my behalf, and your ongoing prayers as I embark on this next journey to help build homes for our brothers and sisters in SE Asia.

This trip is what is called the Habitat for Humanity Big Build, as 2018 marks the 35 year milestone of building houses in Asia-Pacific!

By participating in this trip I will join a team of 200 volunteers from around the world and help transform the lives of 20 families living in Vietnam's Dong Thap Province. Dong Thap Province is on the Mekong Delta. As the terminus of the Mekong River, which winds through six countries from Tibet to Vietnam, it is known as the "Rice Bowl" of Vietnam and is a little over 100 miles south of Ho Chi Minh City. It is where people flee to from the hustle and bustle of the crowded city to a quiet peaceful countryside, due to its natural scenery with several bird grounds. The most noteworthy is the breeding ground of red-headed cranes, which are very rare in the world.

Yet, almost a quarter of the population are poor and survive on approximately \$31.00 a month.

As volunteers, we will work alongside these 20 homeowner families, the majority of which live in unsafe and unsustainable homes in an area that is one of the most disaster prone in the region. The majority of these families would not be able to own secure



decent housing in their lifetime without the support of Habitat and its volunteers.

I truly believe that the importance of decent housing is best expressed in the words of Millard Fuller, the late founder of Habitat for Humanity International.

*"A house is to a family what soil is to a plant.
A plant needs to be rooted.
A family is like that. If a family is not rooted,
it will not flourish. But once a family is well
rooted, all kinds of wonderful things will
begin to happen."*

I am always humbled by the trust and confidence you place in me and am honored to represent your support in this way. I will take each of you with me in my heart and will think of you every day. I look forward to sharing when I return.

Marilyn Bell-Hawley

www.habitatvietnam.org

Do you have Thrivent Choice Dollars?

The Thrivent Choice program encourages eligible Thrivent Financial members to recommend where Thrivent Financial distributes its charitable grant funds. Since 2010, more than \$370 million has been distributed to churches and nonprofits nationwide. Members make this recommendation by directing Choice Dollars to enrolled nonprofit organizations. There are thousands of participating organizations, including Duke Lutherans and St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

To direct your Thrivent Choice Dollars to Duke Lutherans, St. Paul's or other qualified nonprofit, log on to Thrivent (<https://www.thrivent.com/>) and click on My Thrivent – Direct Thrivent Choice Dollars to select the recipient of your Thrivent Choice Dollars. Or call Thrivent at 800-847-4836 and say "Thrivent Choice" when prompted.

Our sympathy...

- ✦ The family and friends of Jess Stepp (niece of John and Linda Foreman) who died on Wednesday, October 10.
- ✦ The family and friends of John Seiz, brother of George Seiz, who died on Thursday, October 11 in Cleveland, OH.

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

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Young In Spirit

The Young In Spirit group will again take to the road. A visit to the Greensboro Science Center is planned for Wednesday, November 14. The Center consists of a museum of various animals, an aquarium, a zoo, some gardens and a café. Animals include several types of lemurs and monkeys, lizards, several cats and a wolf, reptiles in abundance, and a big assortment of aquatic life. The cost for seniors is \$12.50. Please sign up on the attendance sheet that will appear October 28 on the receptionist office desk. We will depart from St. Paul's. See Jim Shoaf or Marcia Redman for more information.

High School Youth Sunday School

Vicar Megan will be leading an 8-week Sunday School series, "Wrestling with the Old Testament," for all high school age youth. From October 28 until December 16, high schoolers are invited to explore the parts of the Old Testament that often puzzle or upset us, but are rarely talked about.

- ▶ Oct 28: *The "Angry God" of the Old Testament*
- ▶ Nov 4: *Violence in the Old Testament*
- ▶ Nov 11: *The Psalms We Will Never Chant in Church*
- ▶ Nov 18: *TWO Female Protagonists in ONE Story! (Or, the Book of Ruth)*
- ▶ Nov 25: *Jonah and the Sad Cows*
- ▶ Dec 2: *History of Chanukah in Scripture and Society*
- ▶ Dec 9: *NO HIGH SCHOOL SUNDAY SCHOOL; all are encouraged to attend the congregational meeting instead (time TBD)*
- ▶ Dec 16: *Holidays of the Old Testament Party!*

Depending on interest, some topics may change over the course of the series. Unlike the Ten Commandments, these are not written in stone!



Do You Hear Me Now?

The Reverend Dr. David Franzen, retired Pastoral Counselor and Clinical Pastoral Education supervisor, will offer a workshop entitled "The Art of Pastoral Listening." In our community at St. Paul's, we come from diverse backgrounds, but we are one in Christ. We are Norwegian or Swedish, or German Lutherans (or maybe just plain old Lutheran); we are young and old; we are family members; we are busy at work or retirement. Sometimes in the middle of it all we feel like we have not been heard or feel like we have not heard our neighbors as ourselves. This will be an opportunity to hone our personal listening skills.

The Continuing Conversation Group will sponsor a light lunch on this day: **Sunday, November 4 following the 11:00 am Worship.**

St. Paul's Readers

Everyone is invited to join the discussion of Paris Letters, by Janice MacLeod, when St. Paul's Readers meet at 3:00 pm on Thursday, Nov 15 in our library. We plan to meet again on Dec. 20 when our book will be Walking Across Egypt, by Clyde Edgerton.



Katherine Circle

All women are invited to the Katherine Circle meeting on Tues, Nov 13 at 10:00 am. Nan Treul will present the devotion. Diana Dominick is presenting our program on Advent, "An Angel Messages." Phyllis Jenkins and Diana Dominick will provide refreshments.

Music Notes

We've been having lots of fun with the **Children's Chimes** group on Sunday mornings and there's still room for more participants! **Come ring with us in Genesis Hall from 9:45 am - 10:00 am Sundays.** Children of all ages are welcome!