

# Cross Connections



*St. Paul's Lutheran Church*

*June 2019*



## Vacation Bible School Monday - Friday, 9 am - 12 pm June 17-21, 2019

Have you visited the church during VBS week? It is amazing to see everyone having so much fun – adults and children alike. There is laughter and singing and lots of happy chatter. God calls us to bring the little children and we have. This year at VBS, we all will learn that “Life is Wild and God is Good”.

The day begins with “**Sing and Play ROAR**” in Trinity Hall where we all learn the daily bible point, verse, the bible lesson, and see our character of the day, collect offering, and learn the songs we will sing all week. The groups will then move from station to station every 20 minutes where they experience **Bible Discovery** (learning more about the daily lesson), **Imagination Station** (applying some science to the themes), **Kid Vid Cinema** (watching a brief video on life experiences and then discussion), **Cool Crafts** (creativity at work), and of course **Recreation and Snack** time (this is where they have a chance to burn off some energy and then enjoy a healthy snack). They will end the mornings with “**Safari Celebration**” in the sanctuary where the topics are reviewed and enjoy more singing.

You are welcome to stop by and get a taste of VBS anytime – or spend some time with us, assisting with our groups. On **Friday, June 21 beginning at 11:30 am**, they will begin their last **Safari Celebration** and a review of all the songs. Following that, everyone is invited to come to Trinity Hall for a wonderful picnic (hot dogs, watermelon, snacks) – all are welcome.

The children will be invited to come to the 11 am worship on Sunday, June 23 to sing some of their songs for the congregation.

If you want to help: we would be happy to find a spot for you. Contact Susan Esposito.

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

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## From the Pastor...

June is a month in which we will be collecting information to help us move forward with Planting hope. Planting Hope is the project that hopes to define a purpose and direction for the ministry of St. Paul's. In an effort to determine general information about our congregation we will be undertaking a two-part process in June.

First, we will be collecting some general information by offering some open ended statements for each of us to complete. These statements will be available soon, but an example might be something like: "The work of God at St. Paul's is \_\_\_\_\_." These statements will be available in an online format, distributed on slips of paper during the gathering time before and after worship, and given to groups within the church. We will collect these, categorize them and use the results to help in the production of a purpose statement.

In addition, we are asking you to take a picture of something important about St. Paul's. We will place these on a room divider in the Atrium area for us to view, and at the end of the month of June we will offer an opportunity for the congregation to vote on your top 3 photos. Prizes will be awarded to the photos that receive the top 3 vote totals. Photos can be submitted by leaving them in either the Pastor's mail box or our Parish Administrator's mail box. Photos can also be emailed to [pastor@stpaulsdurham.org](mailto:pastor@stpaulsdurham.org) or [admin@stpaulsdurham.org](mailto:admin@stpaulsdurham.org). We will get them printed and put on the room divider. Photos should be either 4x6 or 5x7. Photos can be people, places in the church, photos of events, a quiet corner where you pray, outdoor space, a book, anything that is the most important for you about our fellowship. So, tell us a story in a picture.

We anticipate that between the statements and photos, we can get an idea of what the people of St. Paul's think about us and our mission. Please help us by participating in both of these events.

*O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Pastor Scott

## From the Vicar....

St. Paul's took a risk on May 18, 2019. St. Paul's did something that hadn't been done before here. St.

Paul's threw a Neighborhood Block Party.



And I believe we were rewarded for our risk. We met (some of) our neighbors, and they met us. We ate

together, chatted together, discovered unknown connections. We got our name out into the neighborhood by asking to form relationships rather than asking to proselytize. We took a step together outside our walls and into the wider world beyond our comfortable, air-conditioned sanctuary. In the words of Henri Nouwen, a Dutch Catholic priest, we offered "an open and hospitable space where strangers can cast off their strangeness and become our fellow human beings" (*Reaching Out*).

We even got to know our own selves better through the process. I saw so many St. Paul's members reconnecting with, or even meeting for the first time, fellow members who attend the *other* service or sit on the *other* side of the sanctuary. We saw each other not in our Sunday best but in our sweaty, canary-yellow t-shirt best. I know a lot of us tried new food together (Salvadorian pupusas, for those who want a culinary adventure!). We learned about hidden gifts among our congregation, gifts of creativity, problem-solving, graphic design, sound design, and DJ-ing abilities.

I heard a lot of excitement for throwing an event like this next year, perhaps at a cooler time of year and with a bigger reach. I pray that the seeds we've sown bear further fruit! For while this Block Party was a success, it is just one step in St. Paul's journey of faith. And even though I won't be here to coordinate it, the committee members who were so essential to planning the Block Party will still be around!

Thank you to all the volunteers, to Pastor Scott and Susan, to the folks who prayed and who donated, and especially, to the Block Party Committee whose excitement and dedication brought the vision to life. We Lutherans know how to throw a party!

## Congratulations to our 2019 Duke Lutherans Graduates!



We give God thanks for the ways these seven graduates have taken part in this ministry and in our life together here at St. Paul's. Please continue to hold them in prayer as they embark on "ventures of which they cannot see the ending" and "roads as yet untrodden."

- ◆ Laura Buff, Masters of Theological Studies
- ◆ Taylor Wilson, Major in Computer Science
- ◆ Olivia Nillissen, Major in Biomedical Engineering and Minor in Chemistry
- ◆ Sara Yeh, Masters in Environmental Management
- ◆ Emma Schinder, Major in Sociology
- ◆ Ian Powers, Masters in Environmental Management
- ◆ Julie Tonnesen, Masters in Divinity

*O God, you have called us to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

## Duke Lutheran to become Lutheran Pastor

*Part of Duke Lutherans' ministry is supporting Lutheran seminarians during their time at Duke Divinity School. Julie Tonnesen, an ELCA ordination candidate from Salisbury, NC, graduated with an MDiv just a few weeks ago. During her time at Duke, Julie served on our Leadership Team as the Divinity School Ambassador (in addition to serving as the Campus Minister herself down the road at Elon University!). This summer, Julie will begin a year-long internship at Macedonia Lutheran Church in Burlington, NC, as she continues in the ordination process. But before she begins this new chapter, let's hear what Julie says as she looks back on her time at Duke...*



### Describe your call to be a pastor.

I feel called to be a Lutheran pastor because I think Lutheran theology provides a meaningful lens to think about how we are called to live in the world. I love that being a pastor is not just about what happens in a sanctuary on Sunday mornings but also about engaging with neighbors in the wider community.

### What's one experience, person, or place that has informed your call to ministry?

Before coming to seminary, I was a public school teacher in Greensboro, NC. The district my school was in was home to a Sudanese refugee community, a large Jewish community, the city's country club, and the city's homeless shelter. Teaching there – where I was often the only white person in the room – I saw the

injustices my students faced, but also that there's a lot of different ways to work to fight them. I feel the best way to use my gifts going forward is as a pastor.

### What was the best class you took at Duke Divinity School?

Oh my goodness. My Midrash class was amazing. I loved my Women Mystics course. I loved studying Reformation History. But if I had to choose, I'd say Black Church Studies with Dr. Valerie Cooper. The class helped me see the real racial division in the church and gave me tools to further engage in conversations about race and Christianity in America.

### What role has Duke Lutherans played in your seminary experience?

While it's been great to study in an ecumenical context and learn from people across religious tradition an denomination, it's also been such a gift to have a place to connect specifically with the Lutheran community. I have cherished the opportunity to come together every few weeks with other Lutheran seminarians to break bread and have conversations with others on this same path.

## Update on Damascus House

*by Tina Bessias*

*Vice President of Congregation Council*

The Congregation Council is moving to implement the motion passed at the congregational meeting on March 3. That motion was "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." That task team has been appointed, and it consists of Mike Mauriello, Kim Hoke, Ted Dominick, and Tina Bessias, with Linda Foreman and Pastor Anderson serving in an ex officio capacity. This group has met twice with counterparts from Wildflower Cottage. An important step is for St. Paul's to get a survey to demarcate multiple ways of dividing the property; this would help us better understand which parts have potential for future development (which increases value), and which do not. In our busy real estate market, it isn't easy to get a commitment from a surveyor, but we now have one who has promised to do the work – at a time to be determined. Many thanks to Mike Mauriello for his ongoing efforts on this score!

A key component of the plan to sell the property directly to Wildflower Cottage, instead of financing renovations for later sale, is for Wildflower to expand its program this year and rent additional space from St.

Paul's. The lease agreement for this is being worked out separately from the property sale. Additional classroom space would be located both upstairs, at the back of Whitesell Hall, and downstairs, in the front portion of Genesis Hall. Permitting requires a direct exit for the class downstairs, and with a little up-fitting, the door inside the fence on the right (as you face the building) will serve both daily pickup and emergency needs. St. Paul's Preschool Director Amanda Stoen and Wildflower Director Krissy Snyder are making plans for joint use of kitchen and bathroom spaces downstairs. The clean out of storage rooms and physical adaptations, including a second sink in the kitchen area, are beginning to happen. Wildflower has nearly completed enrollment for its expanded program.

Those who were present for the congregational meeting might recall discussion of a 90-120 day timeline for negotiations with Wildflower Cottage. It now appears that that was unrealistic, but there is progress, and the congregation will be updated on a regular basis. Please speak to any of the task team members for more information.

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## Preschool Pitter Patter



by Amanda Stoen

The end of May finished another joyous school year at the preschool. We had seven preschool classes in four classrooms, which included 54 total children and nine teachers! St. Paul's will once again

be offering six weeks of summer camp this summer for children 2-5 years old. We have a total of 50 children attending summer camp!

Thank you for your support of this thriving ministry. This fall we will celebrate 10 years as a preschool! We have grown from a small ministry of one classroom and two teachers to classes for children 10 months through 4 years old. We will be planning some exciting things over the summer so that we can celebrate this fall. Stay tuned...

We have a few more spots in our Twos classes this fall. Registration 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](mailto:preschool@stpaulsdurham.org) for more information.

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## The Good Listener

by Nan Treul  
Stephen Ministers

Listening is perhaps the most important skill that a Stephen Minister uses. Even though you might think of listening as a simple, natural activity, it is also a powerful caregiving tool!

In his book, "**The Good Listener**," Fr. James E. Sullivan lists four crucial steps to good listening:

1. **Stepping Out of My Own World** – The first and foremost requirement is that I must step out of my own world, my own thoughts and feelings. I have to put aside – at least for the moment – my own preconceived notions and prejudices and my own point of view. This is an essential step, and it is no easy task!
2. **Entering Into Your World** – This brings us to the second essential requirement for good listening. I must not only leave my own world, but I must also enter into your world, understand your point of view, and see your world as though I were looking at it through your eyes.
3. **Sensing Your Deepest Feelings** – The third requirement for being a sensitive listener is my effort to search for your deepest hurt; the thing that bothers you the most. Many things may be hurtful to you. And when I respond to any one of them with understanding and care, that response is a big help to you. But, I help you the most when I am able to identify your deepest pain and respond to that with understanding and support.
4. **Giving an Adequate Response** – The final condition for good listening is that I make an adequate response to what you have shared with me. This final step is essential. When you're hurting, you need a warm, caring response to show you that I understand and care. It is not sufficient that I understand internally. That doesn't touch you, unless I show it to you in a clear and adequate way. You need to know that I understand your feelings. You need to have concrete evidence that I don't blame you for them before you can stop blaming yourself.

Would you or someone you know benefit from meeting with one of our Stephen Ministers with this special skill? Please contact Pastor Scott, Judy Kraska, Kim Hoke, or Nan Treul.

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## Memorial Received

We have received a donation in memory of Bill Anderson by Mary Herion, Chapel Hill.



St. Paul's has had a chapter of WELCA for many years. WELCA

stands for Women of the ELCA. Some of the long-term members of our group remember picnics held at Ida Elliott's country property, and all the fellowship and fun the women had together.

Today WELCA still exists. The work of the organization is carried out through the Faithful Friends Fund and Katie's Fund established in 1997 to honor the legacy of Katharina von Bora Luther, raise up bold leaders for the women's organization and support bold and creative ministry for generations to come. Katie's Fund supports ministry in three areas: leadership development, global connections and living theology.

Through WELCA, participants practice seven marks of discipleship: praying, studying, worshipping, inviting, encouraging, serving, and giving. Whether it is making quilts, health and school kits for Lutheran World Relief, or studying the Bible together, they grow in faith and share what they've learned with friends and neighbors.

Every woman participating in the ministry of St. Paul's Lutheran Church is invited to be a member of this segment of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. To learn more about it, please see the website at [womenofthelca.org](http://womenofthelca.org) and find resources you can use. Our WELCA groups takes a break from monthly meetings in the summer. Our meetings will resume in September. We meet on the second Tuesday of the month at 10:00 am in Trinity Hall. Please join us.

*Faithful friends are a sturdy shelter; whoever finds one has found a treasure.*

*Faithful friends are beyond price; no amount can balance their worth.*

*Faithful friends are life-saving medicine; and those who fear the Lord will find them.*

Ecclesiasticus (Sirach) 6:14-16

## Why Should You Have a Will?

by Steve Mzyk

This is another 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](http://stpaulsdurham.org) under Resources.

Part 1: IRAs

Part 2: Life Insurance

Part 3: Wills

Part 4: Charitable Gift Annuities

Part 5: Charitable Trusts

This month we feature Wills.

A will is one of the most important documents you can create for yourself and your family. Not only does a will legally protect your spouse, children, and possessions, it spells out exactly how you want things handled after you've died.

Here are some top reasons to have a will:

- 1) **You decide how your estate is distributed.** A will is a legally-binding document. Without one, there's no guarantee your desires will be carried out. It can minimize family disagreements.
- 2) **You decide who takes care of your minor children.** Without a will, the court must decide who is best suited to raise your children.
- 3) **It prevents a lengthy probate process.** Probate guides property distribution in accordance with a valid will. If you have no will, property is divided by state law.
- 4) **It minimizes estate taxes.** The value of what you give away to family members or charity in a will reduces the value of your estate if and when it's time to pay estate taxes.
- 5) **You decide who the executor is.** Executors put all your affairs in order. They pay-off bills, cancel credit cards, and notify banks. You may, or may not want a family member doing this.
- 6) **Give gifts and donations.** The ability to give gifts is a good reason to have a will because it allows your legacy to live on and reflects your personal values and interests.

When drawing-up your will, you may want to consider leaving a gift to the church just as you might leave a gift to family or friends. St. Paul's and the Lutheran Church have probably been present at many important milestones in your life; your baptism, your marriage, at times of great celebration and at times of great sadness. Leaving a gift to the church in your will is an expression of your gratitude and thanksgiving towards God for all that you have been given and all that you have enjoyed during your life. Think about it.

**Thank You!**

## In the mailbag...

*Thank you to all who shared words and encouragement and sent wishes in cards and notes after Abigail's birth. We'd especially like to thank the Nurturing Committee and those who shared meals with our family in the first few weeks. You kept us well-fed, even when we weren't necessarily well-rested. We're truly blessed to be part of such a loving and thoughtful church family.*

Sincerely,

Sean, Heather, Katie, Maggie, and Abby

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

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## Social Ministry/Continuing Conversation

- 1) Rise Against Hunger will donate the food we packed to school children in Nicaragua.
- 2) Christmas in July returns with a twist. Instead of animals, let us donate towards either "personal and household necessities for disaster survivor (\$200 = a month's supply of necessities) and/or \$75 to "stock a health clinic for a week."
- 3) 20+ individuals participated in the May 5 discussion focusing on the movie and book around the changes in the Durham community and lives of Anne Atwater & C. P. Ellis. There will be more events to come centered around the theology of encountering racism. Hopefully, this summer.

## Congratulations

**Andrew Paris**, a student at the North Carolina School of Science and Math and has been attending St. Paul's, graduated on Saturday, May 25.

**Katrina Woolley** will be graduating from Research Triangle High School this year and will be attending North Carolina State University in the fall.

**Erin, Greta, and William Timmins** will be graduating from Chapel Hill High School on June 15<sup>th</sup>. Erin will be attending Carleton College in Northfield, MN; Greta will be attending the University of Virginia in Charlottesville; and William will be attending NC State in Raleigh.

## Days of the Knights in Durham

A concert presented by Forgotten Clefs

This season, Forgotten Clefs explores what it was like to be a knight in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance. Music from three centuries highlights events from a knight's journey, where you'll learn of battle, unrequited love, and victory! This program features



instruments from thirteen- through seventeenth-century Europe, including recorders, shawms, sackbut, harp, bagpipes, vielle, and percussion. Join us at St. Paul's on **Friday, June 21 at 7 pm** for this program. Reception will follow.

## St. Paul's Readers

Varina, by Charles Frazier, is the book for discussion on Thursday, June 20, at 3:00 pm in the library. In July, the book selection is Enrique's Journey, by Sonia Nazario.

## From the council...

What a joy it was to watch our yellow-clad community throw a party welcoming the larger community. Thanks Vicar!

The t-shirt message, "God's Work, Our Hands" is both aspirational and practical. In that spirit, important work advances on many fronts:

- ▶ **a small team** (Tina Bessias, Ted Dominick, Kim Hoke, and Mike Mauriello), is working with colleagues from Wildflower Cottage to negotiate a sales agreement.
- ▶ **similarly, a small group** composed of Alice Barnes, Claire Cooney, Phil Hart, Tim Hoke had an initial meeting and brain storming for a future capital campaign. Further planning will build on the results of our Planting Hope team and the purpose statement we develop together.
- ▶ **our Finance Committee** is examining roles, work loads and expectations and planning for the future
- ▶ **during Teacher Appreciation Week**, we thanked the staffs of both our Preschool and Wildflower Cottage. Our building is rich with the sounds of children and those who teach and care for them.

And these are just a few of the activities and missions carried out everyday at St. Paul's. Thanks to each and all of you for the many ways you lend your hands to God's work.