

St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Smithfield
139 Craig's Meadow Rd
East Stroudsburg, Pa.
Phone 570-223-9422
E-mail: stpaulscraigsmeadow@verizon.net
Web Site: stpaulscommunitychurch.com
Facebook: St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Smithfield

Pastor Deb Staniszewski

SEPTEMBER 2023

ST. PAUL'S CALL



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America



St. Paul's Mission Statement

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

We seek spiritual maturity through worship, learning and serving.

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

LIVE STREAMING AVAILABE ON FACEBOOK FOR THE 10:00AM SUNDAY SERVICE.

You can also connect to Facebook by going to our web site.



Greetings!

Summer is over, and many of us are headed into different rhythms of life as the seasons change and we start to turn toward fall. Many of us are looking forward to decorating for fall, pulling out our heavier clothes, and to getting our fill of pumpkin spice coffee, muffins, candles, and even breakfast cereal!

The transition of seasons is also a good time to review our spiritual and devotional practices, and be mindful of how much time we're spending both in conversation and in silence with God. You are invited to come to the prayer and meditation room at St. Paul's this fall, for a quick stop to catch your breath and a prayer, or to sit down, get comfortable, and stay a while. Or, perhaps you'd like to take a walk on the labyrinth. Whatever our devotional life and spiritual practice looks like, we are reminded in scripture, that our prayer life is an ongoing, life-giving, conversation with God. As Paul wrote in his letter to the Philippians,

“Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:4-6, NRSV)

Be blessed as you head into the transitions of the season, into sweater weather, and pumpkin everything, and as you continue to develop and nourish your devotional life with God in an ongoing conversation of love, trust, and thanksgiving.

Your Sibling in Christ,

Pastor Deb

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

St Paul Lutheran in Tannersville is holding a meal and bible study called inside out church. It is a pot luck Wednesdays at 6:30 pm followed by a bible study from 7-8.

Please let me know if you would be interested in going on **September 13th** - they could use some support - maybe a group of us could go and meet up there.

Please call lynne in the office or pastor deb if you;re interested

PATH Pocono Area Transitional Housing



We are starting a collection of new bedding for the center, to help out the families who will be transiting into or out of the program. The needs are: Twin sheet and sets, comforters, pillows and pillow cases, towel sets, crib pads and sheets.

The bin will be in the Narthex for 3 weeks until Sept. 10th. If you would like to learn more about PATH you can go to their website www.pathhouse.org.

On Sept. 10th all the collected items will be blessed.

A representative from PATH Candi Palmer will come Sunday the 24th and give a temple talk and pick-up the donations we have collected.

CENTERING PRAYER

*St. Paul's Lutheran Church Smithfield
139 Craig's Meadow Rd, East Stroudsburg PA*

*Everyone one is welcome - Bring some friends and your
meditation pillow if you have one*

*Do you wish that you had 20 minutes to just sit in silence
with God?*

Would you like to join others who feel the same way?

*Centering Prayer is the Spiritual Practice of sitting in the
presence of the Holy One in silence*

*You are invited to join in Centering Prayer Tuesday nights in October
from 6:00-6:30*

COME, PRAY, SIT

In our new prayer and meditation space

*If you need some time to relax with a cup of tea, come at
5:30 for tea and conversation before we practice*

Centering Prayer in fellowship hall.

NEWS FROM THE COUNCIL

“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday



Sept. 10
2023

To celebrate the tenth anniversary of “God’s work. Our hands. Sunday” we will begin a campaign of honoring the sacrifices of our nation’s veterans in preparation of Veteran’s Day. We will be writing cards and letters to veterans of Northeast Pennsylvania. The cards will be available at church

beginning on September 10th and can be filled out during coffee hour or taken home to write at your leisure. Finished cards will be collected at church and distributed to various Veteran’s Administration facilities including the Wilkes-Barre VA hospital and the Allentown VA Outpatient Clinics by Alan and Laura Pride.

We will also be collecting items for homeless veterans for the VALOR Clinic Foundation (VCF). The mission of VCF is Provide Veterans with assistance accessing benefits, securing shelter, and providing long-lasting Post Traumatic Stress resources Unstoppable Program. VCF also Helps find shelter for Veterans who, due to health or means, are unable to find or keep shelter of their own, and Post Traumatic Stress resources to Veterans through their Veterans Unstoppable program.

A collection box will be available in the narthex **beginning on September 10th** to collect the following items.

- Deodorant (men and women’s)
- Toothpaste
- Razors (men and women’s)
- Kitchen utensils
- Towels and washcloths (new or near new)
- Nonperishable food (cans with pull top lids)
- Pots and pans
- Small kitchen countertop appliances (coffee makers and toasters)
- Bed sheets (new only please)
- Bar soap
- Canned fruit and fruit juices
- Denim jeans (men and women)
- Hoodies (all sizes)

These items will be collected until the end of September and then delivered to VALOR Clinic Foundation in Jonas, PA.



**IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR THE CONGREGATION BY
COUNCIL MEMBER SONJI PATRICK.**

ESSA Grant application

Luke 11: 9-10 (NIV)

⁹So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened to you. ¹⁰For everyone who asks receives, the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

I am thankful to report that working with Pastor Deb, the council, and several amazing church members, we have applied for a grant from the ESSA Bank & Trust Foundation. We are requesting \$47,500 in funding to cover the cost of necessary improvements to our church. We are asking ESSA to fund our parking lot overhaul and the replacement of the floors in the fellowship hall, kitchen, and back offices. We are asking that everyone please pray that their board of directors looks favorably upon our request. We are asking that the ESSA board reviews our grant in the spirit in which we wrote it and submitted it; with the goal of improving our community spaces to not only continue the important and generous work that we do as a congregation, but also to continue to serve our community with updated and safer facilities and public spaces. We also wish to grow our congregation and expand our community impact. We have asked, we have sought, and we have knocked. Lord, hear our prayer... †

Welcome Back from Worship and Music!



Happy Labor Day! We hope you had a wonderful summer! We'd like to welcome everyone back from vacation. This year we're excited for the start of Sunday school on September 10th from 9am to 9:45am and to welcome familiar and new faces. If you know a child who would like to take part please reach out to Alisa Nixon for any details.

Special Thank You! – Thanks to all those who helped with the Community Worship & Picnic. Special thanks to Wanda Richardson and Sonji Patrick for their help setting up Celebration Hall, to Faye Jones for manning the grill and all those who helped in the kitchen. Thanks to Tom Smith and Ted Strohl for mowing and getting the outside areas in top shape. Special thanks to Chris Matthy, Dave Libecap, Tracey Lasslett and Tim Lasslett for providing the music and to our very own Pastor Deb for leading us. To all those who helped clean up...thank you!

Summer Music – Thank you to all those who sang or performed on their instrument this summer. We will be ending up the summer with a rendition of His Eye Is On The Sparrow sung by Barbara Edwards and accompanied by Dave Libecap.



Welcome Back Choir!! - We're looking forward to seeing everyone after the summer break and super excited about the new music. Our first rehearsal will be on Thursday, August 31st at 6:30pm in the church. It's not too late to join. Feel free to sit in at any time and you're welcome to join throughout the year.

Praise Team – Praise Team will be leading us in song beginning on the 4th Sunday of September. We're all looking forward to their return. If you have any interest in joining, please see Chris Matthy.

Volunteers Needed – Fall sign up sheets for service assistants are on the bulletin board. If you are available on the same weeks of each month please sign up for subsequent months. Your help as an acolyte, greeter, lay reader, communion assistant and usher is most appreciated. If you have interest in leading a service on one of Pastor's Sundays when she is away, please reach out to Laura Pride.



Altar Flowers and Bulletins – Give the gift of a flower arrangements for the altar and share it with a loved one. Bulletin sponsorships are also available. Check out the bulletin board to sign-up. Checks may be given to the Church Secretary.

Advent & Christmas – Plans are already underway for Advent and Christmas from special Advent services to community musical offerings. Keep your eyes peeled for more information in the coming months.

Next Meeting – TBD. If you have any thoughts about the service or ideas to bring the community to St. Paul's, please share them with a Worship & Music member.

Happy Fall!

Worship & Music



We had a beautiful evening for our Community Worship Service. After the service we all went to Celebration Hall for a wonderful buffet.

Thank you Kathy Ertle for all your work organizing this evening.



St. Paul's joined up with Neola UMC for a Food Fund Raiser at the West End Fair Sunday Aug. 20th -26th.

We had 14 volunteers (2 for each night) to cover 7 evenings 6pm – 10pm.



Thanks to all who represented St. Paul's and helped make the fund raiser a great success !!

Pastor Deb and Paul

Carrie Strohl, Jamie Smith, Dana Strohl

Alisa Nixon and Brooke

Barbara Hart, Janet Pouch

Laura and Alan Pride.

Nancy and Andy Rance



Prayer Labyrinth

Thanks to the generosity of Jeannette Richardson, St. Paul's now has its own portable labyrinth!! This labyrinth can be used in the fellowship hall and many other spaces including outside and is easily folded and stowed away when not in use.



What Is a Prayer Labyrinth?

The Labyrinth is a tool for prayer and quiet contemplation. The labyrinth at St. Paul's has eight circuits, meaning that we walk around eight concentric "circles" in the path from entry to center. While it looks like a maze, there is only one way in and one way out.

Labyrinths are ancient, and common to a variety of religious traditions throughout the world. Our Christian history with labyrinths goes back to the Middle Ages when many cathedrals housed them. Due to fires and wars, and time, many of the oldest labyrinths no longer exist, however one of the most beautiful labyrinths from that time is fully intact and located inside the Chartres Cathedral near Paris, France.

'People walk the labyrinth for many reasons. Some do it to relax, some as a walking meditation, some just for fun. For Christians, who are called to center their lives on Christ, walking the labyrinth can be a beneficial spiritual discipline. In a way, it is a metaphor for the life of faith. The path moves forward, often looping back in the direction from whence you came, only to keep leading you toward the Center. Some people walk in self-emptying silence, open to the sounds of the world around them. Others walk repeating a mantra of some sort like "Jesus, remember me" or Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy," or a verse of scripture, or a line from a cherished hymn. Some walk it at a slow pace, others at their usual walking pace."¹ Every time we enter the labyrinth it is a new experience, so welcome and enjoy!

¹ St. Paul Lutheran Church Albuquerque, NM <https://www.stpaulabq.org/prayer-labyrinth>



WREATH CLASS

Laurie Jewell
Held a wreath class at St. Paul's in August
at St. Paul's
while she and Pete were camping on
vacation.

A few of us attended and learned a new
technique for making beautiful seasonal
wreaths.





SEPTEMBER FOOD PANTRY

Dates Thursday 14th & 28th 9:30am – 12:00noon

Contact Wanda Richardson with any questions.

The food pantry is in need of cereal, canned chicken and peanut butter and jelly.

Anything else you would like to donate is appreciated - It must be non-perishable in can, box or bag.

Please check the "best by" and expiration dates, we cannot accept anything past the best by or expiration date.



Sunday School and Confirmation Classes Begin!

Sunday School will be held on Sunday mornings from 9-9:45 am starting September 10th. Can't wait to see the children! We will meet in the room to the left of the sanctuary.

Confirmation classes will also start in September on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month from 3-5 pm.

Family Movie Night!

We will be holding a Family Movie night on Friday, September 22nd from 6:30-8:30 pm in Celebration Hall. We are planning to watch *Because of Winn-Dixie*. Come and join us for a movie and snacks! All are welcome!

VBS in August was a success! The children had a lot of fun playing games, making crafts, exploring nature and learning about God and his love. Thank you to our wonderful and talented volunteers: Pastor Deb, Barbara Edwards, Laura Biddulph and Brooke Nixon.

We are excited to start this year with our youth and families!

Please reach out with any questions

Alisa Nixon (908) 279-5242

Pastor Deb (570) 350-5115

Blessings always,
Christian Education Team

VBS 2023



Friday Ladies

Friday 9:00am - 12:00am



Donations always welcome of clean cotton fabric printed or solid. Large pieces of fabric for backing, quilting thread or just ask the ladies if you have something they might use.



These beautiful lap throws were knitted and donated to St. Paul's by Alma Brands from Shirley Futch Plaza.

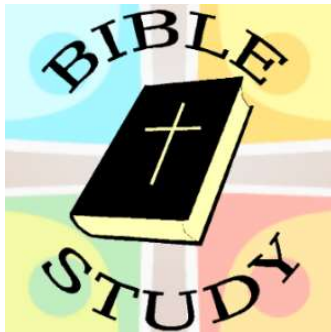




The Altar Guild is looking for a few new volunteers.

Please see Nancy Fritz or leave you name in the office.

No experience necessary you will be instructed and helped as much as you need.



BIBLE STUDY

Starting up again Sept. 12th

**Every Tuesday from 11:30am to 12:30pm.
Everyone is welcome to come.**

COFFEE HOUR

Looking for people to host (helpers available)

Sundays after the 10:00am Service



SIGN UP SHEET ON BULLETIN BOARD

See Madeline will any questions.



Homemade Honey

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

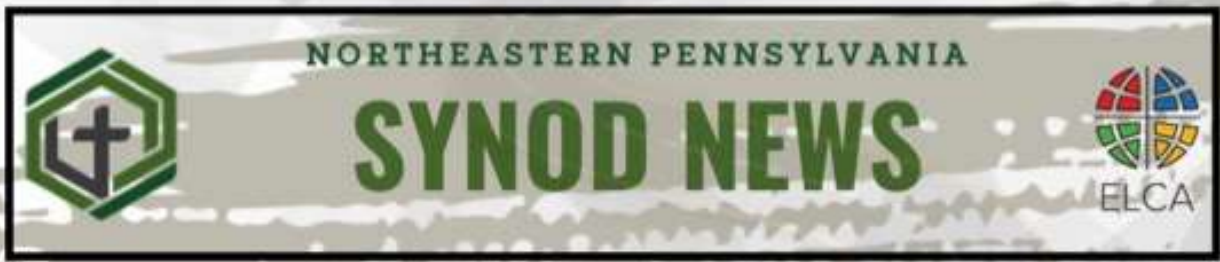


**First Aid Kits are now in the
Office, Kitchen, and Celebration Hall.**

**If you use something just let the
office know so it can be replaced.**



We're always looking for workers, gardeners anyone that wants to spend quality time with others to help outside the church to pull weeds, plant flowers and spruce up the church property. If interested in joining please contact Lynne in the office.



THE THREE ROADS TO VITALITY

As we gather together in the embrace of faith and fellowship throughout the synod (from assemblies, worship, ordinations, anniversaries, and to other synod-wide events) we are reminded of the powerful journey we are on as a Church with a capital C. Our commitment to Christ's teachings has allowed us to evolve beyond mere existence and instead embrace life abundantly. Throughout our synod over the past few years, we've been celebrating three key phrases that define our thriving communities: Growing Young, Stronger Together, and Going Beyond Death to Life.

Growing Young

Embracing life is not limited to any particular age group; it is a concept that transcends generations. We are proud to be a church that nurtures an intergenerational atmosphere, where the wisdom of our elders and the enthusiasm of our youth combine to create a vibrant and dynamic community.

In the teachings of Jesus, we find the encouragement to become like children, embracing a childlike faith that is open, eager, and receptive to God's grace. Our thriving churches have taken this message to heart, fostering an environment that allows every member, regardless of age, to experience spiritual growth and development, to participate in leadership roles, and exude the various elements of the growing young wheel. In doing so, we not only remain young at heart but also enrich each other's lives by sharing diverse perspectives and experiences.

Stronger Together

In unity, we discover strength. Our churches embody the spirit of togetherness, recognizing that we are bound by a shared faith and a common purpose. When we face challenges or trials, we do so as a united body, drawing support from one another, and standing firmly rooted in God's love.

As the Apostle Paul once wrote, "For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ, we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others." (Romans 12:4-5, NIV). This unity allows us to overcome obstacles, reach out to those in need, and fulfill our mission to be the hands and feet of Christ in the world.

Going Beyond Death to Life

In a world that often fixates on the inevitability of death, our church communities boldly choose to focus on the promise of resurrection and life. We are reminded of the words of Jesus when he said, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die." (John 11:25, NIV). This powerful message resonates within our hearts, filling us with hope and joy.

As a Church and as individual churches, we understand that life is not confined to this earthly existence alone. Our spiritual journey extends beyond the boundaries of mortality, and we find solace in knowing that a greater, eternal life awaits us. By embracing this profound truth, we are empowered to live with purpose, spreading love, compassion, and the Gospel to all corners of the world.

As we continue to journey together as a church that goes beyond death to life, grows young, and stands stronger together, let us celebrate the joy of living in God's grace. We invite you to participate actively and fully in our synod's diverse ministries, outreach programs, and spiritual growth opportunities, as they allow us to deepen our understanding of God's love and make a lasting impact in the lives of others. Remember, the limitations of this world do not define us but rather by the boundless life that Christ offers us. Let us carry this message of hope and transformation into our communities, touching lives, and inspiring others to embrace the abundant life that comes through knowing and following Jesus.

May God bless each one of you abundantly, and may our churches continue to be a beacon of light, love, and life in a world that desperately needs it.

The Reverend Lauren Wolfe Blatt
Director of Communication and Events, NEPS
Pastor at Calvary Lutheran Church, Laureldale
Pastor at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Reading



GROWING YOUNG



GAINING STRENGTH



BEYOND DEATH TO LIFE

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

The Hospitality Committee

Committee meets quarterly to review the operation of Celebration Hall. They take care of advertising the hall as a venue, booking events and acting as on-site stewards during those events. They also oversee the care of the hall including maintenance and cleaning.

Please share with family and friends.



Celebrate Your Event



- Full Commercial Kitchen
- Seating: 160 Banquet Style
180 Assembly
- Parking: Up to 75 Vehicles
- Handicap Accessible
- Wi-Fi Ready

- Weddings
- Birthday Parties
- Anniversary Parties
- Banquets
- Meetings
- Workshops



Sweet 16 Party



SEPTEMBER 2023

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SAT |
|--|---|--|-----------------------------|---|---|-----|
| | | | | | 1 Friday Ladies 9:00am - 12:00noon | 2 |
| 3 14 th Sunday of Pentecost 8:30am & 10:00am | 4 Labor Day Office Closed | 5 | 6 Praise Team 6:30pm | 7 Choir 6:30pm | 8 Friday Ladies 9:00am - 12:00noon | 9 |
| 10 15 th Sunday of Pentecost 8:30am & 10:00 Womens Group Sunday School Confirmation Class P.A.T.H. Collection over. VALOR Collection begins | | 12 Bible Study 11:30am – 12:30pm Council Meeting 6:30pm | 13 | 14 Food Pantry 9:30am – 12:00noon Choir 6:30pm | 15 Friday Ladies 9:00am - 12:00noon | 16 |
| 17 16 th Sunday of Pentecost 8:30am & 10:00am | 18 | 19 Bible Study 11:30am – 12:30pm | 20 Praise Team 6:30pm | 21 Choir 6:30pm | 22 Friday Ladies 9:00am - 12:00noon Movie Night 6:30pm - 8:30pm | 23 |
| 24 17 th Sunday of Pentecost 8:30am 10:00am Contemporary Service w/ Praise Team PATH Temple Talk | 25 | 26 Bible Study 11:30am – 12:30pm | 27 | 28 Food Pantry 9:30am – 12:00noon Choir 6:30pm | 29 | 30 |