

St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Smithfield
139 Craig's Meadow Rd.
East Stroudsburg, Pa. 18301
Phone: 570-223-9422

E-mail: stpaulscraigsmeadow@verizon.net
Web Site: stpaulscommunitychurch.com
Facebook: St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Smithfield

ST. PAUL'S CALL

MAY 2025

Pastor Deb Staniszewski



**JOIN US FOR
PRAYER, WORSHIP & FELLOWSHIP**

**SUNDAY SERVICES
8:30AM AND 10:00AM**

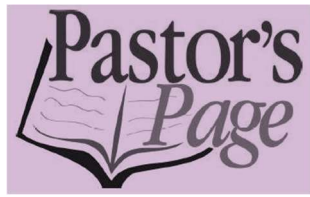
LIVE STREAMING AVAILABLE 10:00AM SERVICE.

Connect to Facebook direct or go to our web site FB tab.

A PDF of the 10:00am service bulletin is on the web site.

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.



Easter Greetings, Siblings in Christ!

Because Resurrection Day was late in April this year, we will be in the season of Easter for much of May. He is Risen Indeed!! God defeated death by raising Jesus from the dead, not to live again and die again, but to live in eternity, extending the promise of resurrection life and forgiveness to all. As Christ's followers we can live with full hearts, in hope, joy and love. Because God can and does open tombs and makes us new every day, we can live in the confidence that He will bring us out of any tomb, and any of the places where we are stuck, when we call on him. In 2 Corinthians 5:17 Paul writes, "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: the old has gone, the new is here"(2Cor 5:17, NIV)

In His rising, Jesus has made a way for us, opening the doors to the kingdom of heaven to all people, inviting us into his living body the church and into God's mission on earth.

The way of hope, and light, and joy is open to us. And because Christ lives, the promise of forgiveness, wholeness and shalom, the promise of abundant life, lived in confidence rather than fear is for us. Jesus lives, and through our baptism, we are freed to live in him. As he breaks into our lives every day, rolling away the stones that keep us separated from God, ourselves, and others, showing up in unexpected people and places, we are empowered to shine Christ's light into this amazing, beautiful, sometimes chaotic, frightening, world, and to bring our voices to witness and testify to the love of God in our lives and in the world, right here, right now.

You're invited to take a moment or two, or five even, to breathe and reflect. Where have you seen the Risen Christ, renewing, restoring, and making things new in the last day or two? How and with whom, might you share what this faith community means to you and what keeps you coming back? How might you share God's love with others today?

Peace and Blessings,

Pastor Deb

St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Smithfield
Income and Expense Statement (UNAUDITED)

Operating Funds

	March <u>2025</u>	Year to <u>Date</u>	Year to Date <u>Budget</u>
CHURCH INCOME			
GENERAL INCOME	\$11,782.36	\$26,851.90	\$30,112.53
BENEVOLENCE INCOME	180.00	511.00	625.02
MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	1,300.14	4,531.62	4,800.00
INTEREST INCOME	<u>863.35</u>	<u>873.67</u>	<u>1,009.98</u>
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$14,125.85</u>	<u>\$32,768.19</u>	<u>\$36,547.53</u>
CHURCH EXPENSES			
STAFF	\$8,808.11	\$27,345.36	\$28,230.96
BENEVOLENCE EXPENSE			
Benevolence (Synod)	583.34	1,750.00	1,813.74
PARISH ADMINISTRATION	349.81	1,567.05	1,650.00
WORSHIP	228.80	880.05	1,383.72
LEARNING	52.48	111.86	562.47
PROPERTY	6,403.83	15,595.70	10,446.27
DEBT PAYMENTS	1,229.00	3,448.00	3,515.49
STEWARDSHIP	0.00	0.00	174.99
OUTREACH	0.00	0.00	124.98
WITNESS	0.00	0.00	144.99
SOCIAL FELLOWSHIP	<u>83.97</u>	<u>83.97</u>	<u>287.49</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$17,739.34</u>	<u>\$50,781.99</u>	<u>\$48,335.10</u>
EXCESS INCOME/(EXPENSES)	<u>(\$3,613.49)</u>	<u>(\$18,013.80)</u>	<u>(\$11,787.57)</u>

Current Cash Accounts

CHECKING ACCOUNTS & PETTY CASH	\$12,199.26	
THRIVENT FINANCIAL	<u>75,656.89</u>	
TOTAL CASH ACCOUNTS		<u>\$87,856.15</u>

Special Funds

SPECIAL FUNDS INCOME			
BENEVOLENCE			
Pantry/Good Samaritan	\$435.00	\$1,337.90	\$0.00
MEMORIAL INCOME	0.00	1,005.00	0.00
INTEREST	63.16	63.16	0.00
COMMUNITY GARDENS	<u>500.00</u>	<u>500.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
TOTAL SPECIAL FUNDS INCOME	<u>\$998.16</u>	<u>\$2,905.96</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>
SPECIAL FUNDS DISBURSEMENTS			
BENEVOLENCE			
Pantry/Good Samaritan	\$0.00	\$371.99	\$0.00
Pastor's Discretion	350.00	350.00	0.00
Postage (Pantry)	14.60	14.60	0.00
MUSIC	<u>0.00</u>	<u>56.99</u>	<u>0.00</u>
TOTAL SPECIAL FUNDS DISBURSEMENTS	<u>\$364.60</u>	<u>\$793.58</u>	<u>0.00</u>

Special Funds Cash Accounts

CHECKING ACCOUNTS & PETTY CASH	\$14,797.27	
THRIVENT FINANCIAL	<u>5,567.37</u>	
TOTAL CASH ACCOUNTS		<u>\$20,364.64</u>



Worship & Music for May

Happy Birthday to former choir member Edie Lansdowne and current member, May Ertle. You're looking swell ladies!

Garden Dedication – Sunday, May 11th we'll be having a dedication of our Bee, Butterfly and Bird garden. We'll be having a planting day on Saturday, May 10th. Please check out the flyer for details. We hope you'll come out to support our gardeners!

Praise Team – Join us on the 4th Sunday of May for Praise Team's Contemporary service at 10am before they take their summer break. If you're interested in being part of the Praise Team experience, contact Chris Mathy.

Choir – Choir will be singing until June 8th when they will be singing Who You Say I Am, a contemporary piece in honor of confirmation Sunday! Choir will resume rehearsals towards the end of August. We'd love to have you join us! Bring a friend!

Summer Musical Opportunities - If you're interested in singing or playing an instrument during the summer season, just take a moment to sign up on the bulletin board. If you know of anyone who would like some performing time, please feel free to add them to the list on one of the available Sundays. Please let Dave Libecap or Kathy Ertle know if you need an accompanist.

Concerts – There are a number of concerts during the summer.

Shawnee Inn - has free concerts on Tuesday nights out on the lawn by the Pavilion. Check out their website for announcements. Bring a lawn chair. Donations for the performers are gratefully accepted.

Beacon Hill Summer Concert series - Thursday, June 12, 5:00 pm, by the Early Music ensemble Vox Luminis on tour from Belgium, will be held at the First Presbyterian Church (575 Main St, Stroudsburg, PA 18360. **No reservations needed.** As usual, there is no admission fee; rather a suggested donation of \$20 adult, \$10 senior, \$5 student at the door. The Program includes two works by Carissimi on the biblical "Historia" (stories) of Jephtha and Abraham and Isaac.

2025 Pocono Summer Chorus - to benefit Meals on Wheels will be holding their concert on Wednesday, July 23rd at 7pm at St. John's Lutheran Church at 9 N. 9th St, Stbg. Rehearsals begin the end of May. If you're interested in singing, please contact Kathy Ertle for information and a rehearsal schedule.

Music on the Mountain Songfest - Tuesday, August 5, 2025 a choral festival featuring a concert at 7:00pm at St. John's Lutheran Church, 9 N. 9th St., Stbg. Admission to the concert is free, tickets are not needed.

Alaska Pete's Restaurant - Have dinner and listen to the piano music of our very own Dave Libecap. Weekends.

If you know of any concert or theater events that you'd like others to know about, please contact Kathy Ertle or the office to be included in future newsletters.

Check the bulletin board for sponsorship opportunities!

Next meeting - Monday, May 5th at 6pm

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Happy Spring!

Worship & Music Committee

YOU ARE INVITED TO
ST. PAUL'S

BEE, BUTTERFLY AND BIRD GARDEN PLANTING DAY

JOIN US IN PLANTING THE NEW GARDEN
OR JUST COME TO WATCH AND SUPPORT US
LUNCH AND REFRESHMENTS TO FOLLOW

MAY

SATURDAY

10

10AM - 1PM

2025

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
139 CRAIGS MEADOW ROAD
EAST STROUDSBURG, PA 18301



**OUR GREAT VOLUNTEERS
WHO PASSED OUT FOOD PANTRY EASTER DINNERS OUT
TO MANY FAMILIES.**



PALM SUNDAY



AGAPE FEAST



EASTER SUNDAY

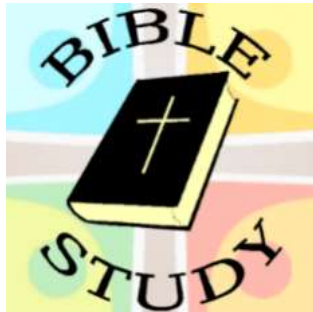




Thursday May 15th
9:30am – 12:00noon

The food pantry needs: cereal, peanut butter and jelly, canned tuna. Spam and canned fruit.

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.



Every Tuesday 11:30am to 12:30pm.
JOIN US



FRIDAY LADIES

Every Friday 9:00 – 12:00 noon

The ladies make lovely lap robes that they share with hospitals, nursing & retirement homes plus our newly baptized babies go home with one. They are always appreciated and if you know of someone that might need one, please let Edie know.

Come and Join in.

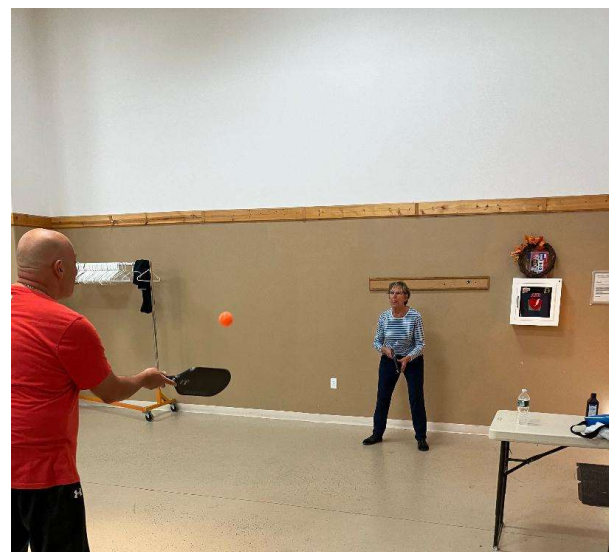
Donations always welcome of clean cotton fabric printed or solid. Large pieces of fabric for backing, quilting thread or just ask the ladies if you have something they might use.



**Come join us for Pickleball in Celebration Hall!
Beginners and more experienced players welcome.**

Download the app TeamReach and use the code STPAULS. Once in the app you can look at the calendar for times.

ANY questions text or call Laura Biddulph.
570-369-0359





Hello Church Youth Families,

Sunday School class is held on Sunday mornings from 9-9:45 am. All children from preschool and up are welcome! We meet in the room to the left of the sanctuary.

Our last Sunday School class will be on May 11th.

Confirmation Class for this month (1-3pm):

May 18th – Last Class!

We have had an amazing year of Christian education! The children have learned so much about Jesus and his life. They had a great time learning and having fun together and working on service projects together!

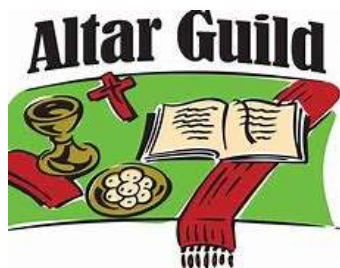
Blessings always,

Christian Education Team

Alisa Nixon (908) 279-5242

Pastor Deb (570) 350-5115

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED !!



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

No experience necessary you will be instructed and helped as much as you need. Assistance is needed for a month at a time.

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE



Sunday Coffee Hour

**Help with Funeral
Luncheons**



**Contact Jeannette Richardson or Faye Jones
if interested.**



**Contact Wanda Richardson. Faye, Noreen or office
If you would like help Thursday Food Pantry**

SUNDAY SERVICE



**If you would like to help on a Sunday contact
Kathy Ertle or office.**

Ushers and Lay Readers

Contact Pastor direct.

**If you are interested in leading a service on one of
Pastor's Sundays when she is away.**

Musical Opportunities –



CHOIR meets Thursdays at 6:30pm in the sanctuary.
If interested, contact Kathy Ertle.

THE PRAISE TEAM meets on the 1st and 3rd
Wednesday of every month at 6:30pm and
plays for the Contemporary service at 10am on
the 4th Sunday of the month.

Please reach out to Chris Matthy if interested.

Sponsor Opportunities – Sign-up sheets on Narthex Bulletin Board Be A Worship Sponsor!

For \$22.00, or split with another, you can sponsor a worship service. The money goes towards expenses for web sites used in bulletin preparation, copyright for songs and supplies like paper and toner. Checks can be given to Dana Strohl or Secretary Lynne Williams.



Altar Flowers

The flower sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board. Celebrate a loved one with a fresh flower arrangement from Floral Boutique. Please find someone to share with you if you'd like to. Order forms and checks may be given to Dana Strohl or Lynne Williams.



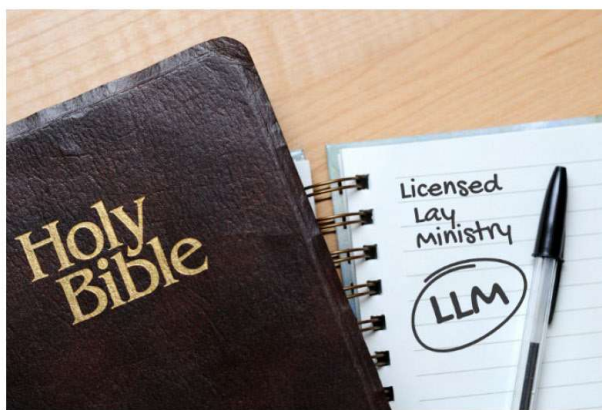
Saying Yes to God: A Personal Witness to Licensed Lay Ministry

Written by: Michael Haspe, Licensed Lay Ministry Candidate

I am a lifelong member of Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tamaqua, PA, where I currently serve as the Christian Education Director. I felt my strongest pull to ministry during the pandemic. It was during the shutdown that God began to utilize me in new ways. I was one of four people—including the Pastor, camera operator, and organist—tasked to broadcast our services live. During this time, I learned to serve as a Cantor, Lector, and Communion Assistant, and I found I really enjoyed being a part of worship leadership. When the congregation came back, the anxiety I had previously experienced that kept me from serving (even though I really wanted to) was gone. I finally felt free to step into the roles God had been preparing me for all along.

Yet how did I get here? Near the end of 2020, I witnessed an unexplainable life-saving miracle. It was then I felt the urge to share my testimony and to preach. At the time, there was no Synodically Authorized Lay Minister (SALM) or Licensed Lay Minister (LLM) program in place, and I didn't feel called to rostered ministry. I wasn't sure what path was right for me, but the desire to be in deeper service was undeniable.

Then, in 2023, my partner of 19 years was diagnosed with Stage 4 colon cancer. My world collapsed. I had a good cry with my Pastor and told her that even though I trusted God, I was afraid. She encouraged me to go home and rest and assured me we would talk more the next day. The very next morning, she called me with news: the synod had approved the LLM program. I knew in that instant it was God commanding my attention.



It felt as though God was saying, "Michael, during this time of uncertainty and fear, YOU WILL FOCUS ON ME." I shared this with my Pastor, and no sooner did it come out of my mouth than my fear turned to calm. There aren't words to describe the sense of peace and clarity that followed.

So that's what I did. I enrolled in the LLM program and kept my eyes LASER focused on God. The anxiety didn't return. Late last year, my partner underwent major surgery to remove the cancer. The pathology report stunned the medical team—what had looked and behaved like Stage 4 cancer was downgraded to Stage 2. Today, my partner is cancer free. While doctors still can't explain it, I can. I had just witnessed a second miracle.



So that is why I am here, and that is why I am so passionate about the Licensed Lay Ministry program. It has given me a pathway to serve others and to share the good news of Jesus Christ, while I continue to discern whether rostered ministry might be the next step. For years, people in my church and community have said to me, “Michael, you are a Pastor.” And whether that becomes a career goal for me or not, this program enables me to explore ministry in meaningful ways. Through it, I can share the Gospel and lead others to Christ.

It’s no secret there is a shortage of Pastors. Being a Licensed Lay Minister allows me to serve in ways that are within my current gifts while also challenging me to grow in areas I may have once feared. LLMs can help address the pastoral shortage across our synod. No congregation is too large or too small to benefit from the presence of a lay minister. I believe the LLM program can be a catalyst to grow our churches, open new doors, and revitalize ministries.

The LLM retreats have been one of my favorite parts of this journey. The preaching retreat especially stands out. It provided me with practical tools to write and deliver sermons with confidence. I now feel my preaching is more focused and effective because of what I learned there. Pastor Peggy Wurtele has been a huge inspiration to me. Her motto—“Proclamation, Proclamation, Proclamation!”—encourages us to seize every opportunity to proclaim the Gospel and remind people that grace is FREE and abundant through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As a perfectionist, I hold onto her other phrase too: “...and Jesus loves us anyway.” It helps me focus less on small details and more on the heart of the message. That reminder has been freeing and empowering.

I want to leave you with a few questions. Ask yourself honestly: “Do you love Jesus Christ? Do you believe in the free gift and promise of grace and eternal salvation? Do you love telling others about Jesus? Do you love people?” If you answered yes to any—or all—of these questions, then the LLM journey might be right for you. Talk to your Pastor or the LLM Coordinator. Take time to pray and discern if this is your next faithful step.

One excuse I frequently hear is, “I would love to do this, but I’m too old.” Let me tell you—you are NEVER too old to proclaim the Good News! Your ministry could change someone’s life. If you’re even a little bit curious about LLM, talk about it. Ask questions. You might be surprised where God is leading you.

The most surprising thing I’ve learned is the impact one message can have. I’ve preached dozens of sermons, and the most humbling moments come when someone quietly tells me that something I said encouraged them, gave them hope, or inspired them to try something new. That’s the greatest reward of all.

Discover how Licensed Lay Ministry is equipping lay leaders for faithful service. Learn more at godslove.org/LLM, or email Licensed Lay Ministers Coordinator, Pastor Jira Albers at llm@nepsynod.org

DID YOU KNOW that your Mission Support helps fund areas of the synod like this one and many other important initiatives? Your contributions are making a significant impact and helping others grow in faith, supporting the synod’s lanes of Growing Young, Gaining Strength, and Going Beyond Death to Life, along with the directions of loving like Jesus, healing like Jesus, and engaging like Jesus. To learn more, visit godslove.org/missionsupport

CELEBRATION HALL RENTALS

Please share with friends. For information contact

SONJI PATRICK (CALL OFFICE FOR PHONE #.)



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



Sunday MAY	Monday 2025	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 Friday Ladies 9:00am - 12:00noon	3
4 3rd Easter 8:30am Sunday School 9:00 – 9:45am 10:00am	5 Worship and Music 6:30am	6 Bible Study 11:30 – 12:30pm	7	8 Choir 6:30pm	9 Friday Ladies 9:00am - 12:00noon	10 Planting of the new Bee- Butterfly and Bird Garden 10am-1pm POSTOFFICE FOOD DRIVE
11 4th Easter 8:30am Last Sunday School 9:00 – 9:45am 10:00am MOTHERS DAY	12	13 Bible Study 11:30 – 12:30pm Council Meeting 6:30	14 Praise Team 6:45pm	15 Food Pantry 9:00am – 12:00noon	16 Friday Ladies 9:00am - 12:00noon	17
18 5th Easter 8:30am 10:00am Cong. Meeting After 10am Service Confirmation 1-3	19	20 Bible Study 11:30 – 12:30pm	21 Praise Team 6:30pm	22 Finance Meeting 6:00pm Choir 6:30pm	23 Friday Ladies 9:00am - 12:00noon	24
25 6th Easter 8:30am 10pm service Contemporary with Praise Team	26	27	28	29	30	31