

St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Smithfield
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ST. PAUL'S CALL

DECEMBER 2025

Pastor Deb Staniszewski

***WE WELCOME EVERYONE TO JOIN US FOR
PRAYER, WORSHIP & FELLOWSHIP***



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



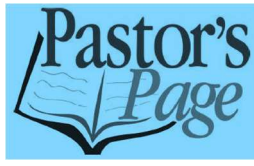
**All Special Service's and times are listed on
Worship & Music Page and Calendar**

OUR MISSION:

**To be a beacon of faith guided by the Holy Spirit.
Growing in Christ, we share God's grace through witness,
love, and service.**

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

**You can connect to FB direct or go to our web site FB tab.
A PDF of the 10:00am service is on the web site.**



Christmas Greetings!!

“2 In those days Caesar Augustus declared that everyone throughout the empire should be enrolled in the tax lists.....⁴ Since Joseph belonged to David’s house and family line, he went up from the city of Nazareth in Galilee to David’s city, called Bethlehem, in Judea. ⁵ He went to be enrolled together with Mary, who was promised to him in marriage and who was pregnant. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for Mary to have her baby. ⁷ She gave birth to her firstborn child, a son, wrapped him snugly, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the guestroom.” (Luke 2:1-7, CEB)

In the miracle of Jesus birth, God sent his son in human form so that all people might know and experience God’s salvific, radical, love. God revealed that his love is for everyone, and that in God’s economy, power and riches are not what matters. Love matters, and peace, and grace. Forgiveness matters, and hope, and joy, and faith. Making room for just one more matters.

God sent Jesus into the world in an unexpected place and time, to a poor young Jewish woman, and her soon to be husband. Jesus is born in a barn, not a palace or fancy home, not even the guest room of the home they are at, but the barn.

Mary and Joseph most likely stayed the home of a relative or family friend. Travelers had to rely on the hospitality of others, sometimes distant relatives or even strangers when they traveled. Homes were built so that the space for the animals was in a courtyard attached to the house.

We don’t know why Mary and Joseph ended up in the stable and not inside the house. Maybe because they traveled for 90 miles, and were the last ones to show up. Maybe in the crazy busyness of Bethlehem during the census, whoever came first got the best space. Regardless of the details, in that busy, overpacked, town filled with travelers, someone made room for just one more tired couple, and Joseph and Mary were not left sleeping in a field or on the street.

It got me thinking of how with love there’s always room for one more, and our childhood Christmases at my Nana’s house. My Nana had a small-ish condo with a couple of bedrooms, and 3 chihuahuas, Twinkle, Sparkle, and Snowflake. At Christmas, the whole extended family went to the apartment and stayed over. There were people everywhere, suitcases, and gifts, and people on fold out sofas and uncomfortable beds, and we slept where there was enough room. It was chaotic but fun, everyone together, squished and finding space where you could find it. The best part was, it wasn’t about where you slept, or which table you sat at for dinner, although everyone wanted to be at the grown-ups table, it was about love, and making room for everyone. It was about being together, and sharing space, time, and food. It was about celebrating the wondrous gift of Jesus’ birth—Emmanuel, God with us, dwelling among humanity.

Imagine that first Christmas: crowds gathered for the census, families making room for just one more, unaware that this “one more” was the Prince of Peace, our Savior, quietly entering the world.

Your Sibling in Christ.

Pastor Deb

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

Operating Funds

October 2025	Year to Date	Year to Date Budget	
CHURCH INCOME			
GENERAL INCOME	\$11,170.91	\$99,786.96	\$100,375.10
BENEVOLENCE INCOME	80.00	1,487.00	2,083.40
MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	1599.24	19,428.17	16,000.00
INTEREST INCOME	7.41	2,235.05	3,366.60
TOTAL INCOME	<u>\$12,857.56</u>	<u>\$122,937.18</u>	<u>\$121,825.10</u>
CHURCH EXPENSES			
STAFF	\$9,411.45	\$90,881.90	\$94,103.20
BENEVOLENCE EXPENSE	0.00	4,666.66	6,045.80
PARISH ADMINISTRATION	718.67	5,810.34	5,500.00
WORSHIP	225.81	4,216.41	4,612.40
LEARNING	0.00	699.68	1,874.90
PROPERTY	5,389.48	50,084.49	34,820.90
DEBT PAYMENTS	1,229.00	12,051.00	11,718.30
STEWARDSHIP	0.00	271.40	583.30
OUTREACH	0.00	275.00	416.60
WITNESS	0.00	75.00	483.30
SOCIAL FELLOWSHIP	0.00	244.99	958.30
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$16,974.41</u>	<u>\$169,276.87</u>	<u>\$161,117.00</u>
EXCESS INCOME/(EXPENSES)	<u>(\$4,116.85)</u>	<u>(\$46,339.69)</u>	<u>(\$39,291.90)</u>

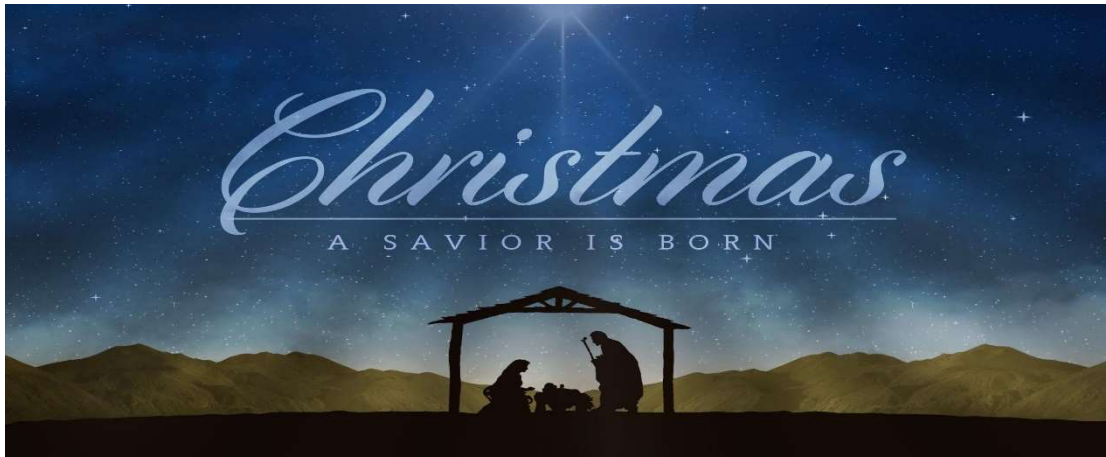
Special Funds

SPECIAL FUNDS INCOME			
BENEVOLENCE			
Pantry/Good Samaritan	\$822.05	\$4,208.95	\$0.00
Pastor's Discretion	0.00	25.00	0.00
DESIGNATED SCHOLARSHIP	0.00	500.00	0.00
MEMORIAL INCOME	0.00	1,005.00	0.00
INTEREST	0.00	204.00	0.00
COMMUNITY GARDENS	0.00	24,655.00*	0.00
PLAYGROUND	0.00	46.00	0.00
TOTAL SPECIAL FUNDS INCOME	<u>\$822.05</u>	<u>\$30,643.95</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>
SPECIAL FUNDS DISBURSEMENTS			
BENEVOLENCE			
Pantry/Good Samaritan	\$393.05	\$2,422.68	\$0.00
Pastor's Discretion	500.00	1,634.91	0.00
Postage (Pantry)	0.00	14.60	0.00
Scholarship	0.00	1,924.57	0.00
YOUTH	0.00	100.00	0.00
MEMORIAL FUNDS	23.31	1,000.00	0.00
MUSIC	0.00	56.99	0.00
MAJOR REPAIRS & REPLACEMENT	0.00	2,023.00	0.00
GARDENS	0.00	24,155.00*	0.00
PLAYGROUND	100.93	100.93	0.00
TOTAL SPECIAL FUNDS DISBURSEMENTS	<u>\$1,017.29</u>	<u>\$32,932.68</u>	<u>0.00</u>

Cash Accounts

Operating Checking Account	\$15,859.15		
Special Funds Checking Account	<u>10,394.59</u>	\$26,253.74	
Operating Funds in Thrivent Financial	\$42,076.24		
Special Funds in Thrivent Financial	<u>5,608.21</u>	\$47,684.45	
Total Cash			<u>\$73,938.19</u>

*\$24,155 income and expense were a donation. This did NOT come from church funds.



Worship & Music

Advent Series – We will be presenting a series on **Tuesdays in Advent from 6-7:30**. It will touch on the topic of Hope overcoming fear during the Holiday Season. Each Tuesday we will be having different activities with a special Advent Wreath Making event on Tuesday, December 9th at 6pm with cookies and cocoa. All are welcome.

Praise Team – will be presenting a special Advent service on **December 21st**. There will be combined pieces with the choir. Join us for this special service and bring a friend. This a combined service at 9:30am.

Christmas Services – Christmas services will be held on **Wednesday, December 24th at 3:30pm and 7pm**. We look forward to hosting your families for this special night and welcoming the blessings of baby Jesus into our hearts.

Lessons & Carols Service – A Lessons & Carol service will be held on Sunday, **December 28th**. This will be a combined service at 9:30am.

Check the bulletin board for sponsorship opportunities!

Next meeting – TBD. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please reach out to Kathy Ertle, Chris Matthy or the office.

Wishing you Christmas Blessings!

Worship & Music Committee

November 30th

1st Advent with Healing Service.



***The Salvation Army Angel Tree
and tickets set up in the
Narthex***



**Next Pantry is Thursday Jan 8th
9:30am – 12:00noon**

The food pantry needs: Peanut butter and jelly, cereal, 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.

CELEBRATION HALL RENTALS

Please share with friends. For information contact Sonji Patrick 1-917-817-4895



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



Phoenix Martial Arts Society / St. Paul's Celebration Hall

Days & Times

Tuesdays and Thursdays

6:30 PM - 7:30 PM 6-12 yrs, 7:30 PM - 8:30 PM 13 yrs+ (Adult)

Please feel free to contact us at [570-982-4999](tel:570-982-4999)

[Phoenix Martial Arts Society | East Stroudsburg PA | Facebook](#)



Champion Force Athletics / St. Paul's Celebration Hall

Making a Difference Through Youth Cheerleading Programs

<https://www.facebook.com/CFAEastStroudsburg>

CFA Site- <https://championforce.com/>





Growing New Communities of Faith: Updates on SAWCs, SAOMs, and Mission Leadership

Written by: Deacon Kat Tigerman, NEPS Directors for Evangelical Mission



Every year, the Synod Council re-authorizes our Synod-authorized ministries, typically in October. It is also a great opportunity to hear updates from these ministries, the people they are serving, and the stories of their communities. It is always a powerful testament to God among us – often in ways we might consider “non-traditional” – ministries made possible by our NEPA congregations’ mission support and the mission support to the ELCA.

Synod-Authorized Worshipping Communities (SAWCs for short) are communities committed to worshipping together but who may do so outside the normal “walls” of the church. A SAWC may look like a recovery worship service, dinner church, messy church, or church on the streets. SAWCs are also communities discerning and taking steps to become formal (known as “organized”) ELCA congregations. They are led by a Mission Developer. Our NEPA Synod currently has 3 SAWCs: Common Ground in Wyomissing, Common Ground in Reading, and the Indonesian Lutheran Church of Scranton (which just became a SAWC in September!).

Synod-Authorized Outreach Ministries (SAOMs for short) are ministries committed to evangelism, outreach, and discipleship. A SAOM may look like a food truck ministry, a small group ministry, or a prison ministry. They are led by a SAOM Leader. Our NEPA Synod currently has 2 SAOMs: Free to Be in Bethlehem and Hope’s Table in Reading. Free to Be is a ministry dedicated to reaching out to moms, families, and folks in recovery by building intentional small groups on the road of faith and discipleship. Hope’s Table was initially a SAWC but is in the process of transitioning to a SAOM. While Hope’s Table continues to offer weekly worship, it is a feeding ministry which builds community and creates a safe and welcoming space for all to find the love, grace, and warmth of Jesus.

Each year, to help support these leaders and connect them to one another, the ELCA hosts a Mission Leadership Training Conference for Mission Developers, SAOM Leaders, Strategic Ministry Leaders, and key leaders of various SAWCs and SAOMs. This year Seminarian April Mulvey was invited to attend as a Mission Developer Scholarship recipient along with Deacon Kat Tigerman as DEM. 118 leaders from across



the country attended the 3-day training in Chicago the last weekend of September.

The first week of October, the Region 7 DEMs (Directors for Evangelical Mission) hosted a 2-day retreat for Mission Developers, SAOM Leaders, and other new ministry leaders. There were 35 participants across the 6 Synods of Region 7 who came together to worship, reflect, connect, learn, and pray. The Retreat was facilitated by the ELCA's Organizing for Mission who grounded the time theologically as well as provided practical on-the-ground skills and tools for these leaders are the margins and cutting edges of Church. NEPA Synod participants included:

- Rev. Lauren Applegate, Free to Be
- Seminarian April Mulvey, Hope's Table
- Rev. Tom Scornavacchi, Common Ground
- Deacon Kat Tigerman (DEM)
- Rev. Dr. Jennifer Hope-Tringali (Director for New Ministries).

Region 7 was blessed to receive an ELCA grant to help make this retreat affordable to leaders who are serving ministries on the margins. Our Director of New Ministries will be piloting a learning opportunity in early 2026 to work alongside leaders who have a new ministry idea that they want to develop into a plan of action. Interested leaders are encouraged to email Pr. Jennifer at jennifer@nepsynod.org.



Thank you for all you and your congregations do to pray for and support these leaders and these ministries across our Synod and across the country!

DID YOU KNOW that your Mission Support helps fund areas of the synod and ELCA 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 godsllove.org/missionsupport.

SAWC & SAOM

godsllove.org/sawc-saom

Want to learn more about the NEPA Synod's Synod-Authorized Worshiping Communities and Synod-Authorized Outreach Ministries? Visit our website for details.



Sunday December	Monday 2025	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 Bible Study 11:30 – 12:30pm	3	4 Food Pantry Choir 6:30pm	5 Friday Ladies 9:00am – 12:00noon	6
7 2 Advent 8:30 & 10:00am Sunday School	8	9 Advent Wreath Making & Lessons 6-7:30pm Council 6:30pm	10	11 Choir 6:30pm	12 Friday Ladies 9:00am – 12:00noon	13
14 3 Advent 8:30 & 10:00am	15	16 Bible Study 11:30 – 12:30pm Advent Crafts & Lessons 6-7:30pm	17	18	19 Friday Ladies 9:00am – 12:00noon	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
4 Advent 9:30am Special Combined Service Choir and Praise Team			CHRISTMAS EVE Candlelight Service 3:30pm & 7:00pm	MERRY CHRISTMAS	Friday Ladies 9:00am – 12:00noon	
28	29	30	31			
Lessons & Carols 9:30am Combined Service			New Years Eve			