

Cross Connections



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

February 2021

Holden Evening Prayer Around the World

Each year Holden Village (the Lutheran retreat center in the remote wilderness of the Cascade Mountains in Washington State) invites people across the globe to lift their voices as one community through participation in Holden Evening Prayer. This special



setting of Evening Prayer, composed by Marty Haugen when he served at Holden as the musician-in-resident from 1985-1986, is also often sung by the Duke Lutherans when we gather for worship on Sunday nights.

Because now more than ever the world cries out to God for healing, justice, and mercy, we invite you to join the Duke Lutherans via Zoom on Wednesday night, February 3, at 7 pm to sing Holden Evening Prayer with us. This night we will support and draw strength from one another and the Holy Spirit, reaffirming our identity as siblings in Christ called, empowered and sent to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God.

We look forward to worshipping together with our beloved partner congregations of St. Paul's and Grace. Please join us!

<https://duke.zoom.us/j/94204211191?pwd=NvdOVHdXOWxsYU5TMVBTS1RObnZmdz09>

Meeting ID: 942 0421 1191

Passcode: Holden

God's Peace,

Pastor Amanda Highben

The Rev. Scott M. Anderson, Pastor

Susan Esposito, Parish Administrator & Editor

Jacqueline Nappi, Minister of Music

Amanda Stoen, Preschool Director

Judy Goans, Vicar

Jackie Fryt, Bookkeeper

The Rev. Amanda Highben, Associate Pastor, Duke Lutherans

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From the Pastor...

Lent is just around the corner. Ash Wednesday is February 17.

I say this up-front because we continue in pandemic protocols. We continue to find new ways to be together and complete as many ritual events as possible.

Some had suggested I send home ashes and let you put them on yourselves. This flies in the face of our understanding of the rite. It is our confrontation with mortality in the face of others, it is a reminder that without Christ we are but dust.

So, we will be providing Ashes to those who are able to come out. We will record the Ash Wednesday liturgy for viewing on Vimeo prior to and on the day of **Wednesday, February 17**.

We will offer both drive thru communion and imposition of Ashes, three (3) times that day:

- 8:00 am until 8:30 am
- 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm
- 5:30 pm to 6:00 pm

Communion will be distributed as we have been doing on Sunday mornings, but near the fire pit, playground area and once you have received communion, you will drive to near the main entrance and someone (Pastor and/or Vicar) will impose ashes. The one of us that will be doing the ashes will be gloved, masked and after each person receives the ashes, a sanitary wipe will clean the glove, it will be rinsed and dried prior to imposing ashes on the next person.

It is our hope that we can begin this season of Lent with this ritual, to mark the beginning of our season of repentance, meditation and hope. We will have Lenten devotional booklets available beginning Sunday, Feb 14 and again during drive thru on Ash Wednesday.

I know that we all have COVID-19 fatigue. The frustrations continue to mount. We will be calling through the church directory in the coming days to touch base, hear your stories and ask you to share any ideas you have on how we can stay connected.

Please continue to pray for one another and to lift our congregation in prayer.

Pastor Scott

Children's Ministry

Our congregation is struggling to find ways to reach our children. Betty Hinshaw and Carol Ostrowski are working with families with children

providing resources and support. We offered Advent activity kits and Christmas gift bags at the end of last year.

Vicar Judy and I are beginning to work with our confirmation aged young people. We are meeting via zoom on the second Sunday of each month at 1 pm and are currently beginning work with the small catechism and Lutheran history. We have four young people from our congregation registered for

Confirmation Camp this summer. We participate with four other congregations and have the maximum number (16) participants that the camp will allow. We will be the only campers during our week in July.

Camp Agape has worked diligently to prepare a safe environment. We will be doing an intensive study on the Small Catechism this summer.

Vicar Judy will begin providing a children's message for each recorded worship service beginning with the Jan. 31st recorded worship service.

Please know that the staff is open to suggestions on other ways to reach our young people.

Please email or call the church office with suggestions.

Pastor Scott



Lent Fast Approaching

No pun intended with that title! February is bringing in a host of events – Black History Month, Groundhog Day, Valentine's Day, Mardi Gras, and a bunch of observances that I have never heard of. Significantly for us, our Lenten fast will begin on Ash Wednesday, February 17.

Some of us feel we are already completing a year-long fast, a fast that prevents us from visiting in person with friends and family, from eating out at restaurants, participating in social events, going to the gym, and strangest of all for Lent, simply being together in church. As more of us are vaccinated, we hope that these limitations will begin to be reduced, allowing us to resume something that at least *resembles* a normal life. In the meantime, we struggle along the best we can, trying to safeguard our own health and that of our families, and to take care of one another as well as we can.

Beginning on February 24, we will hold a series of six Lenten Wednesday evening services around the theme, *The Fast That I Choose*. This theme is based on Isaiah 58:6-10, which speaks of fasting in terms of loosening the bonds of injustice, sharing bread with

the hungry, and caring for the homeless poor. In a year when so many are already giving up so much, and so many people are facing hardships, it seems appropriate to think about our Lenten fast in terms of reaching out to others.

For six weeks, we will gather over Zoom for a Compline service that focuses on taking care of our neighbors. I hope you will all join in the services, so please mark your calendars now.

Blessings,
Judy Goans, Vicar

Duke Lutherans News: Active and Living Hope

“Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?” I will make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.” Isaiah 43:18-19

As the prophet Isaiah declares, our God is always about to do a **new** thing ... and for this reason, we have hope, an *active* and *living* hope, that good things are now before us.

Last Sunday night I met with our student leaders for a back-to-school retreat. Each of them shared a word or phrase that expresses their vision for our campus ministry’s mission and ministry as we move forward. Here’s what they said:

- *I hope our community will be a source of calm and peace for students.*
- *I believe the hope we held onto last semester is closer to being fulfilled.*
- *I feel a greater sense of spaciousness and possibility.*
- *I am hopeful about everything that is ahead.*
- *I am excited to think about what is now and what is next as we move forward together.*

After we shared our visions, we brain stormed ideas for worship, Bible studies, service-learning projects, and other creative, meaningful, and fun ways to be in life together this semester. Granted, much of what we do is still virtual (and Zoom fatigue hasn’t gone away), but we are thankful to have one another and this community of faith where we are known and loved as God’s children, forgiven and called for the sake of the world.

As Dietrich Bonhoeffer writes in *Life Together*, “Christian community is not an ideal we have to realize, but rather a reality created by God in Christ in which we may participate. The more clearly we learn to recognize that the ground and strength and promise of all our community is in Jesus Christ alone, the more

calmly we learn to think about our community and pray and hope for it.”

Together with you in prayer and hope,
Pastor Amanda

Duke Lutherans Spring 2021 Calendar

Ongoing Weekly Activities

Sunday Evening Prayer and Fellowship, 5:30 pm

Holden Evening Prayer, ELW Evening Prayer, Unfailing Light

Bible Study, Tuesdays, 10:30 am

Esther and Ruth: Persisting in Courage

Only two books of the (Protestant) Biblical canon bear women’s names; Esther and Ruth, a queen and widow respectively, stand out for this reason and so many others. We’ll dig into their dramatic stories and ask how they give us hope and courage for today.

Fellowship Lunch, Wednesdays, 12 pm

The fellowship might be virtual, but at least the food is real! We laugh together, share personal highlights and lowlights, and spend time in prayer and reflection.

Reconciliation Book Study with St. Joseph’s AME Church, Monday nights: biweekly beginning Jan 18, 7 pm

Roadmap to Reconciliation 2.0: Moving Communities into Unity, Wholeness, and justice, by Brenda Salter McNeil *Funded through the NC (ELCA) Synod’s Peeler-Casey Grant

Special Events

Holden Prayer Around the World, Wed, Feb 3, 7 pm

Each year Holden invites Villagers across the globe to create community through participation in the Holden Evening Prayer. This year more than ever, the world cries out for healing, justice, and mercy. This night we will support and draw strength from one another, reaffirming our values as people called, equipped, and sent to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God. Together with our partner congregations: St. Paul’s and Grace Lutheran.

Duke Lutherans Eat: Local (and Global) Cuisine!

Thanks to a generous COVID relief grant from the NC (ELCA) Synod, we are providing 4 meals this semester from local Durham restaurants owned by our siblings of color. Although we can’t gather on campus to eat together, we’ve still found a way to feed our students and support our amazing Durham community! Featuring food from Goorsha (Ethiopian), Cosmic

Cantina (Tex-Mex), Zweli's (Zimbabwean), and Beyu Café (American soul food).

Service Learning Projects: St. Paul's Calls Ministry and Blessing Bags

Together with St. Paul's, students will make frequent calls of support and love to members who may feel isolated or lonely as the pandemic continues. Also, thanks to a generous Thrivent Action Team grant, we are partnering with DurhamCares (Durham Pilgrimage of Pain and Hope) to assemble blessing bags for our Grace House neighbors and friends. Although we deeply miss our front porch meals, this is a safe way to nurture our relationships while serving some of our friends' specific needs. DurhamCares will further help us in learning more about how issues of systemic racism and injustice make our immigrant neighbors even more vulnerable to the virus.

AND...because all students need brain breaks!

- Zoom Games and Trivia
- Crafting Projects
- Paint Along Party
- Faith and Film Nights

**If you have any creative craft/maker/design skills that you might like to lead for us over Zoom, let us know! We'd love to have you join us!*

Preschool Pitter Patter

by Amanda Stoen

What does it mean to be a play-based preschool? At St. Paul's Preschool & PMO, we believe play is an important part of a young child's life and while they play, they are learning valuable skills. Children learn to make decisions and choices on their own, from what activity to do first during free time or on the playground, to choosing a color to paint with first. Pediatricians agree that playtime is a very important part of a child's development.

Through play, they learn a lot about themselves and the world they live in. As they practice making decisions, play with imagination, and take active leadership, they also grow in confidence and resilience. Teachers provide learning opportunities for children to have individual instruction with different tasks as well as small group settings. We boost their curiosity and knowledge in a pressure-free way.

Over the next several months, we want to show how our preschool children play and what they are learning while they play. This month's activity is a personal favorite – painting!

When I easel-paint, I learn...

- ▶ To develop my imagination and creativity
- ▶ To develop eye-hand coordination
- ▶ To distinguish and purposely create shapes
- ▶ To express my feelings and ideas
- ▶ Relationships of space and size
- ▶ Concepts of symmetry, balance and design



And finally, we are enrolling for the 2021-2022 school year. Registration forms and enrollment procedures can be found on our website: stpaulspreschooldurham.weebly.com. Please contact me if you are interested in learning more about our preschool program.

Council Corner

*by Claire Cooney
Congregational Council President*

Greetings St. Paul's Church Community! This is Claire Cooney, your newly elected Church Council President for 2021. The Council also elected Tim Hoke as the Council Vice President and Sean Slane as the Secretary. I am very grateful for Tina Bessias, Tony Perrotte, and Lisa Lewis for their great leadership on Council in 2020. Back on January 16, we met as a newly formed Council for what has been a mainstay for the past 10 months – a zoom meeting. While I know we would all much rather be meeting in person, the online retreat was a wonderful way for the whole Council to come together and learn the inner workings of the Church, as well as plan goals for this upcoming year. Prominent themes from our goals include how we can be supportive of our Church community and broader Durham community; how we can remain sustainable and environmentally-friendly choices together; and ultimately, how we can grow our church community. I am reminded of Pastor Scott's sermon from January 24 about Mark 1:14-20 where Jesus calls us to be fishers of people. Pastor Scott asks what does it mean to follow Jesus? It means to study, worship, pray, give, and invite. I hope you will join us this year in living out that mission together.

The Role of a Stephen Minister

by Nan Treul



During Stephen Ministry training classes, we study the roles of the lay ministry we provide. The best way to describe what Stephen Ministers do is to say that they care; they “Bear one another’s burdens, and in this way ... fulfill the law of Christ.” (Galatians 6:2)

Stephen Ministers meet one-on-one with adults of the same gender, usually once a week for about an hour. (Of course, during the pandemic, we cannot meet in person, but meet via Zoom meetings, FaceTime, or over the phone). They listen to their care receivers, help them recognize and express their feelings, maintain appropriate boundaries, and remain committed to their care receivers over the long haul. Stephen Ministers maintain their care receivers’ confidentiality. They don’t try to solve others’ problems but rather listen and help others work through their own problems.

A defining characteristic of Stephen Ministers’ care is that it is distinctively Christian. Stephen Ministers care as God’s servants. They count on God’s power to bring about healing and hope. Although people may be able to eventually work through their problems alone, having someone walk beside them and listen to them will often make the burden easier.

Stephen Ministry is a lay ministry and is more formal than the care of an acquaintance or a friend provides because it is structured on the care receiver’s needs. It is less formal, however, than the care that pastors or mental health professionals provide. Stephen Ministers are not trained therapists and are not equipped to minister to those who need professional care.

Stephen Ministers may provide five types of care:

- ◆ Crisis care, including grief, illness, unemployment
- ◆ Follow-up care, such as ongoing care after a crisis
- ◆ Chronic care, as with long-term disability, chronic pain, dementia, loneliness, or degenerative disease
- ◆ Preventative care, for anticipated life events such as empty-nesting, retirement, moving
- ◆ Care-giver care, supporting those who care for someone else

If you feel that you or someone you know could be helped by having a Stephen Minister, please contact Pastor Scott, or Kim Hoke or Nan Treul, who are Stephen Leaders.

In the mailbag...

My thanks go to everyone at St. Paul’s who has remembered me in their prayers, cards and phone calls. All of your caring thoughts were deeply appreciated.

*Please stay safe,
Ida Elliott and family*

Thank you to all who donated books to the Book Harvest MLK-day Dream Big Book Drive! We collected 52 books from the church and 269 books from the Preschool!! What a fantastic outpouring of support for this important local organization.

Heather Slane

Our Sympathy

We offer our prayers of sympathy to the family and friends of William “Bill” Jewett, who died on Saturday, January 16 at Croasdaile. We especially remember his daughters, Melissa Jewett and Pam Jewett Isley.

Altar Flower Requests

The forms and sign-up to request Altar Flowers are available for 2021 in the atrium on the credenza below the TV monitor. Envelopes are in the bottom tray with the forms. You can sign up at any time and drop your form(s)/check/envelope in the drive-by communion line or in the drop box in the hallway outside the finance office. You are also welcome to email Susan at admin@stpaulsdurham.org, include your flower request date and recognition to be printed in the bulletin. Pay as indicated above.



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Reparations? Exploring Some of the Questions

The COVID-19 pandemic has made the wide gaps in financial well-being even more apparent to many of us. Reparations efforts are among some of the remedies that are being proposed to make resources in our society more equitable. Just last fall, in October 2020, the Durham City Council approved a resolution calling on national government leaders to appoint a commission to study ways to “increase racial equity,” possibly with a reparations program for Africa-American descendants of enslavement. William (Sandy) Darity, an economist at Duke University, is a prominent leader in this effort. His book, “From Here to Equality,” is often studied and cited in conversations about race and economic justice.

The Continuing Conversation Group (CCG) will be holding two Zoom discussions this month to learn about and explore the topic of reparations: Please plan to join us.

- ▶ **On Feb 17 at 7:00 pm**, we’ll watch a 30-minute video of Prof. Darity’s TED Talk: “A Blueprint for Reparations in the US,” followed by a half-hour of discussion.
- ▶ **On Feb 21 (Sunday afternoon) at 3:00 pm**, we’ll gather again for more in-depth questions and discussion. Some history of other US reparations programs will be presented, along with a brief “tour” or resources for further study.

While we hope you’ll be able to join us for one or both Zoom gatherings, we also know that spending time in front of your computer might not be appealing these days. If you can’t join us, please take some time to look at the resources we’ve collected: If you paste this link into your web browser window, it will take you to a spreadsheet or articles, a few videos, and a podcast: <https://bit.ly/3iFQ4K0>

Please join us in studying, listening, and learning about efforts to assure health, safety, and blessing for all of God’s children.

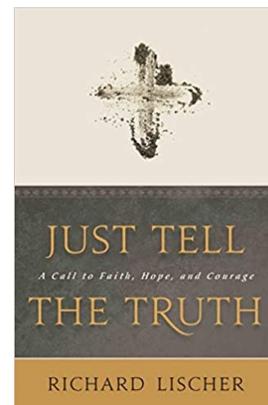
Continuing Conversations Group

St. Paul’s Readers

We will be discussing Reason for Hope by Jane Goodall, at our zoom meeting Thursday, February 18 at 3:00 pm. In March we will read and discuss Too Smart for God, by Dave Simpson.

New Book Published

A collection of Richard Lischer’s sermons has been published by Eerdmans Publishing Co. It is titled *Just Tell the Truth: A Call to Faith, Hope, and Courage*. Some of the sermons were preached at St. Paul’s. The book will be available in the St. Paul’s library or at Amazon.com.



Empty Bowls 2021

The show is on! Empty Bowls is going virtual for 2021 at Urban Ministries of Durham

But don’t be dismayed – there will still be soup to slurp and opportunities to scramble for bowls, and much, much more of the Empty Bowls traditions you have come to love!

So, save the date: **Thursday, March 4th, 2021**. We’ll kick-off on March 1st with a week-long Silent Auction of signature, one-of-a-kind bowls that you’ll love! For a flat \$25, your ticket this year will be for one 12 oz. meal-size soup available for pickup from participating restaurants. At UMD, we’re all about neighbors helping neighbors. So this year, a portion of funds will go to support these awesome restaurant partners who have remained committed to the work of UMD over the years – and during a pandemic!

Check their website for complete details:
www.umdurham.org