

Cross Connections



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

March 2024

Continue to Worship with us During Lent



Wednesdays – Mar 6, 13, 20

- + **12:00 pm Holy Communion and Healing Service in the sanctuary**
- + **6:00 pm Suppers in Trinity Hall**
- + **7:00 pm Lenten Worship**

Vicar Gina Schaefer is in charge of our Wednesday Lenten Worship. This year, we will pray and reflect on the spiritual disciplines. We will hear a word of meditation from people who participate in the ministry of St. Paul's. Vicar Gina will also be leading a workshop during the Sunday School hour every week that will go deeper into the spiritual disciplines. Here is the Vimeo Link for the 7 pm service:

<https://vimeo.com/event/4073534>

Stations of the Cross – Pastor Lorrel Strom-Jensen
March 1, 8, 15, and 22 at 12:00 noon

Lent begins the second week of February and Stations of the Cross will again be offered on Fridays at 12:00 noon in the Sanctuary. You can join me to follow Jesus on this path with scripture and prayers that tell the Holy Week story, as we use the Stations of the cross mounted on the side walls of the sanctuary. Following Jesus on this path offers pause for us to contemplate our own lives, in our time and place. Please join me on any of these Fridays.

Holy Week through Easter Worship Schedule

Maundy Thursday, March 28, 2024

- + 12:00 noon Holy Communion
- + 7:00 pm Holy Communion and Foot Washing.

Good Friday, March 29

- + 12:00 noon The Way of the Cross
- + 7:00 pm Tenebrae.

Vigil of Easter, March 30

- + 7:00 pm. There will be a reception following the Easter Vigil. This service will only be in-person, no recording.



Easter Sunday, March 31

- + 8:30 am Worship
- + 11:00 am Worship, live streamed at <https://vimeo.com/event/1478223> and recorded for viewing on vimeo at <https://vimeo.com/stpaulsdurham>
- + 9:30-10:30 am Easter Breakfast in Trinity Hall. We will be serving pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage, pastries, fruit along with beverages.
- + 10:15 am Children's Easter Egg Hunt. Assemble on the main entrance patio. Bring a basket to gather eggs from the playground and ark areas.

The Rev. Scott M. Anderson, Pastor

The Rev. Amanda Highben, Associate Pastor, Duke Lutherans

Gina Schaefer, Vicar

Susan Esposito, Parish Administrator & Editor

Dr. Ted Turner, Minister of Music

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From the Pastor...

I can't believe I am actually writing this but Easter is right around the corner. Lent came early this year and that means Easter will be here soon as well. March 31 to be exact. So, as I write this, I am beginning to plan Holy Week, Easter Sunday, and for some time away.

We will have our usual services on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil. Easter day will include 3 baptisms at 11 am worship and Ted is planning a special anthem.

March will also be our 2nd Rise Against Hunger event and many of you will give or participate toward the CROP Walk. So a busy month is on tap.

I also want to talk a little about a subtle change to internship. You all know that I require interns to wear a clerical collar when working. This is to help with identity and to assist in forming interns into the pastors they will be. However, times change. I am the only internship supervisor that has required this for years. In addition, most Lutheran churches do not require pastors to be in clerical garb every day. In fact I have been the only pastor in the Triangle conference that normally wears a clerical collar daily. So, in an effort to allow our current Vicar Gina the opportunity to see what relationships are like if she doesn't wear a clerical collar, I am allowing her to wear business attire during the week when she is not doing worship or visiting parishioners. If you stop by the church during the week you may even find me in a shirt and tie and not a collar. Change is always a challenge. I pray you all will bear with us as we experiment with this change.

March is a time to move to spring and we have begun Spring cleaning. Keep your eyes out for things we are getting rid of to reduce clutter. We will give the congregation an opportunity to take some of it home. We are also working on the bulletin boards in the hallway on the way to the elevator. This will begin to fill up in the coming days with information on our new committee structure and ways that we can all serve our God.

Pastor Scott

Greetings, friends at St. Paul's,

If you're tuned into the St. Paul's Facebook page, you might have noticed we've been posting a lot about the saints lately! This year St. Paul's is taking part in "Lent Madness" a forty day tournament bracket where we vote on different saints to determine who is worthy of the "Golden Halo" (and likely, eternal bragging rights). If you haven't yet, pop onto Facebook, and throw your hat in with your favorite saint! There is a

bracket posted on the bulletin board in the atrium if you want to see who wins each round.



Expect to see the likes of Saint Gertrude of Nivelles (the patron saint of cats), Barbara (the patron saint of canons), Kassia, Julian of Norwich, Thomas the Apostle, and many others. Each post will include some information and history about the saint. Personally, I was most interested to learn about Casimir, a prince of Poland known for his piety and devotion, and who is known for being depicted with an extra hand in art.

It might seem odd for Lutherans to talk so much about saints. In truth, the saints are a great way to celebrate the lives and examples of the faithful who have gone before us. Their witness to the world can inspire us in our own ministry and encourage us to "run the race set before us," as they once did. The apology of the Augsburg Confession states that the remembrance of saints serves three purposes: thanksgiving to God for the example of his mercy and salvation; strengthening of faith by their example; and imitation of their faith and virtue.

For this purpose, the Lutheran church keeps an extensive calendar of days of commemoration throughout the year for this purpose. You can find this calendar at the start of the ELW on page 15 under the title "Lesser Festivals and Commemorations." Next time you have a hymnal in your hand, check it out! Who knows, you might just find a new favorite saint.

Vicar Gina

Preschool Pitter Patter

by Amanda Stoen

Did you know that the ELCA has an educational ministry called the Evangelical Lutheran Education Association (ELEA)? St. Paul's Preschool & PMO has been a member of the ELEA for over 10 years. There are 1400 Lutheran schools, including full and part-time

preschools, and many of them are members of the ELEA. The ELEA provides connections between schools throughout the country.



The ELEA provides Lutheran education leaders with a community through communication, professional development, faith formation and professional resources. This association was a huge support during the early part of the pandemic as schools were figuring out how to reopen safely and shift our learning to outside. We met weekly on Zoom to support each other, brainstorm challenges and share success stories. After some time, the weekly meeting shifted into professional development online

workshops for directors and principals to learn more about areas such as outdoor education, faith formation, race and culture, operations, and other health and safety guidelines.

The ELEA listserv has been invaluable over the years to share best practices, tuition and salary information, staff recruitment, grant opportunities just to name a few. I have learned so much about other types of early childhood programs and private Lutheran schools from the ELEA. If you would like to learn more about the ELEA, please visit elcaschools.org.

Centering Prayer Opportunity

by Pastor Jan Huntley

This Lent, St. Paul’s will be offering a Centering Prayer opportunity. The Centering Prayer Group will meet each Tuesday at 1:00 pm in the library beginning Tuesday, February 27 and continuing through March 26. If you are looking for an opportunity to enrich your

Lenten journey, while also growing closer to God, this offering is for you! Please pray about it and consider taking part of the Lenten Centering Prayer Group as you journey through Lent.

Social Ministries Committee

EXPAND/EXPLORE/EDUCATE

by Joan Pepper

Updates from February’s Social Ministry Committee meeting:

- 1) We celebrated the recent coming together of the Continuing Conversation Group (CCG) and Social Ministry. The CCG has been closely affiliated with the Social Ministry committee since CCG’s formation in 2016. The Social Ministry committee commends and honors the work achieved by the CCG, particularly in their efforts re: education and raising awareness about matters of racial justice and social inequity. In addition to more fully incorporating CCG’s work into ongoing and future Social Ministry activities, we also commit to planning events on an on-going basis which continue in the tradition of celebrating ethnic and cultural diversity and continued dialogue as established by the CCG.
- 2) We reaffirmed that our committee’s primary emphasis will continue to be addressing **food insecurity** issues, both locally and globally. After reviewing lists of potential ministries, we also added **voter education and registration** as a secondary focus for this year.
- 3) We developed a tentative calendar of activities for the remainder of 2024. In addition to the events already scheduled (Rise Against Hunger, CROP Walk Durham, and Camp Destiny), we hope to organize activities for:
 - Earth Day (April 22)
 - Juneteenth Celebration (June 19th)
 - Voter Registration and Education, possible training (August)
 - Ministry Fair (September)
 - Gleaning event (October)
 - Celebration of “African Americans in the Arts” (October/November)
 - Fair Trade Fair (November)

Since we are in the very beginning stages of planning for these events, we need & welcome your input and expertise! Please contact Joan Pepper (irisdragonfly@yahoo.com) if you are interested in helping plan any of these events and/or have previous experience organizing an event on the list and are willing to point us towards resources. As per our

regular practice, we will be creating leadership teams to do the organizing for each event ... you will not be left on your own!

CROP Walk Leadership Team – We are seeking 2-3 volunteers to serve on an expanded leadership team for CROP Walk Durham, an annual event held each year on Palm Sunday which allows individuals to take direct action to fight hunger both locally and around the world. If interested, please contact Pastor Scott or Joan Pepper!

Our next Social Ministry committee meeting will be held on **Tuesday*, March 12, at 7:00 pm** in Whitesell Hall. **Please note that we have changed our monthly meetings from second Mondays to second Tuesdays.* We will focus on a carry-over agenda item from February – identifying additional ways of sharing information about current ministries with church members and visitors; we also hope to work on a directory of community-based volunteer opportunities for individuals seeking additional ministry opportunities beyond what is offered through St. Paul’s. All church members and regularly attending visitors are always welcome to join us; hope to see you there!

Volunteer Opportunities with ongoing Social Ministries:

- ◆ **Urban Ministries:** Volunteers to serve lunch at UMD’s “Community Café” on the 3rd Saturday of each month. Sign-up link: bit.ly/UMD_Signup
- ◆ **Creation Care:** New CC team members to assist with the increasing number of CC projects
- ◆ **The Refugee Support Team:** Additional female drivers
- ◆ **Camp Destiny & Burton Magnet Elementary (BME) Community:**
 - BME - Volunteers to read 1:1 with 1st graders *weekly commitment on your choice of weekday/s
 - BME - Volunteers to assist students with homework during afterschool program* - weekly commitment on your choice of weekday/s
 - *NOTE: Prospective volunteers for the BME in-school activities must first complete a volunteer application through Durham Public Schools; application available at: <https://www.dpsnc.net/domain/133>

If you are interested in volunteering in any of these capacities, please contact either Joan Pepper or Pastor Scott; they will connect you with the contact person for that area of ministry.

Youth Corner

Youth group is springing into Spring with adventures and education. We have been talking about Ash Wednesday and what it means that we are “Created to be Authentic.” Also, some of the youth went bowling with Joan and Megan during the February lock-in. During our time bowling, we discovered that as a collective we may not be the best bowlers but we still had a ton of fun. Before watching movies in the atrium, we played a few rounds of Uno where we learned a lot about each other and our different understandings of the rules.

Player	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total	
James	1	1	3	8	-	8	7	-	5	4	7	79
Ben	4	2	1	6	3	9	-	9	7	9	9	93
Joan	-	7	9	-	5	4	7	2	8	6	8	96
Megan	-	4	7	9	8	-	6	7	8	1	13	121
Team	Team 27										389	
Player	James										1.3.14	



As we were preparing for our participation in the February 13th Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, we continued to talk about Ash Wednesday and what Lent means, especially in the Lutheran faith. We can’t say THANK YOU enough to all



those who came out to enjoy our cooking and get to know us, and graciously donated to our trip to New Orleans this summer to attend the 2024 ELCA National Youth Gathering. We appreciate the support of the St. Paul’s congregation, and we have been able to raise enough money to come very close to funding our entire trip. Your donations also help support the overall youth group activities and learning experiences.



One of the youth that was at the supper was Megan Herring, she helped wash dishes. You can also find Megan playing in the bell choir. Here is a little bit about Megan by Megan. “I am a 10th grader at Riverside High School, and I like music. I play 5 different instruments, but 3 consistently. I also

really like drawing, singing, and jazz. I am looking forward to hopefully seeing some jazz bands play since New Orleans is the real birthplace to jazz.” You can continue to see and learn about Megan and all the other youth at the activities coming up.

March will bring more adventures. You will get to see some of the youth as we participate in the Rise Against Hunger drive. We will continue to talk about Lent and Holy Week in the Lutheran faith. We are looking forward to our biggest fun-filled time when we go to OC Aerial in Durham. It is an indoor adventure park that incorporates: a ropes course, climbing and bouldering, ninja course, zip line, and so much more. We will then come back to church for the night of games and movies.

The youth group again thanks you for all your support and donations to help our group grow and develop alongside the members of St. Paul’s. If you want to learn more about the youth group, please reach out to any of the youth, Joan Albright, or Megan Cunningham.



CROP Walk Durham

Celebrating 50 years of walking together to fight hunger

WHO: YOU and ME & ME and YOU!

WHAT: The CROP Hunger Walk is a family-friendly walk that links the Durham

community together in solidarity with our brothers and sisters all around the world who have to walk long distances daily for food and water. Funds raised from the walk provide food and other resources for families in Durham and across the globe. This will be an in-person, outdoor Walk; the entire route is approx. 4.5 miles.

NOTE: Virtual participation is still an option... as is walking part of the route – simply turn around and head back to Duke Chapel when you need to!

WHEN: Sunday, March 24 (Palm Sunday)

◆ **1:30 pm** -- Registration, Music, Greetings & Global Village Activities

◆ **2:30 pm** – Walk Starts in front of Duke Chapel

WHERE: Download the 2024 Durham CROP Hunger Walk Map

WHY: Hunger is one of the greatest injustices facing our world, but it doesn’t have to be this way. Ending hunger is possible in our lifetime. You can help make it happen!

HOW: You can join St. Paul’s team of walkers and/or make a donation here:

<https://events.crophungerwalk.org/cropwalks/team/st-pauls-lutheran-church-of-durham>

If you have questions or need assistance with registering, please contact Joan Pepper, acting CW team captain (irisdragonfly45@yahoo.com).

Tips to maximize the impact YOU can make:

- ▶ Personalize your page info and link your social media accounts when you register – it’s super easy! Walkers who link their social media accounts when registering raise on average of \$150 more than walkers who do not!
- ▶ Recruit a friend, or two, to register and then walk with you... they will be gaining additional sponsors AND you will get to spend an afternoon with a good buddy!
- ▶ Ask friends, co-workers, classmates (as permitted), neighbors, & family to sponsor you; several small donations can add up to make a BIG difference!

Consider this YOUR Golden opportunity to make a difference!

A Touching, Heartfelt Thank You

by Penni Perrotte

Here is a quote from an 89 year old woman who was recovering from a bad fall and had been given a “pocket prayer shawl” (otherwise known as a “prayer patch”): *“I must tell you that I fall asleep each night with that precious Little Prayer Patch resting on my heart and hunt for it in the covers each morning! It has become a talisman of prayer/faith/friendship. I will never lose it. THANK YOU to all who have knitted and prayed at our church.”*

From the Nurturing Committee: *“Just as trees grow their branches towards the sun, spend more time with the people who are our source of light.” Dr. Amit Sood*

Refugee Field Trip

It was a field trip like none other. On February 4, the good souls of St. Paul's who are helping to resettle two Afghan families took them to Durham's Museum of Life and Sciences and glory be, none of the 15 children who participated got mislaid.

The trip was organized by new member Shelly McGee who recruited Tim Hoke to drive the church bus, while Kim Hoke, Deb Tabert, and the Harts, Phil and Sally, drove the mothers along with the smallest, non-walking children in separate cars.



The children were a sight to behold in their shimmering Sunday best clothes. One of the mothers had been sewing for

a month to make outfits for her five daughters. The other mother had been hard at work as well. Both mothers are highly skilled seamstresses and it shows.

The two Safi families are related (cousins, they say), but St. Paul's is officially helping with only the Gul Wali Safi family, which is under the aegis of Lutheran Services of the Carolinas. This family has 9 children. The second family has 8 children.

Several members of St. Paul's have been helping with the minutiae of resettlement, which has included organizing and driving to doctor's appointments, getting the children enrolled in their respective schools, and arranging school bus transportation. With so many children in the two families, this has required an enormous chunk of time. In addition, members have been taking the families shopping and generally helping them to get oriented to their new surroundings in multiple ways. Shelly McGee and Carolyn Ulrich have been visiting the families once a week to teach the mothers some English.

The members of St. Paul's refugee resettlement committee are Morris Casper, Phil and Sally Hart, Jayce Getz, Kevin and Ellen Lavery, Nan Treul, Bill Gresham, Shelly McGee, and Carolyn Ulrich. If you would like to get involved, contact Morris Casper.

Camp Destiny 2024

by Tim Hoke



In August this year, we will host our third Camp Destiny. I have just begun planning with Tameko Piggee, our social worker contact at Burton Elementary School about the camp for this year. She said that some of the children are already asking about when camp will take place.



This year will be a little different because the grant from the Synod has mostly been spent. We will need to raise funds to hold the camp for this year. Maybe with support

from St. Paul's we may be able to receive additional

funds from the Synod for next year. The cost for running our camp and enriching the lives of these children is about \$2,500 per year.

Even our volunteers are excited about Camp Destiny for this year. Plan on being a part of this vital but fun part of our social ministry for this year.

In the mailbag...

To the members of the Nurturing Committee and all the other members of St. Paul's who were so much help to us over the past year.



Beginning in February, 2023, and for the past year since then, either my wife or I, or both of us have suffered more ill health than ever before in our lives. During this period, we've received calls, cards, and especially good food which taken altogether have helped to restore our bodies and our spirits. So thank you members of St. Paul's for all you have done for us. We don't wish any of you ill health or bad luck, but if misfortune should befall you, we are obligated to help, and we will do so willingly and cheerfully.

*Thanks again,
Morris and Pat Casper*

Creation Care – Recycle Beyond the Bag

Several local stores recycle more than plastic grocery bags. Next Tex is the collector at our local Food Lions, Harris Teeters, Kohl's, Lowe's Foods, and Sprouts.

Here is a list of items accepted:

- ▶ Produce bags
- ▶ Store Bags
- ▶ Ice Bags
- ▶ Ziploc and other reclosable Bags
- ▶ Cereal Bags
- ▶ Bread Bags
- ▶ Newspaper sleeves
- ▶ Dry Cleaning Bags
- ▶ Bubble Wrap
- ▶ Plastic e-commerce mailers.



For more information and to learn what they make from all of these recycled plastics, visit the website:

www.nexttrex.com

St. Paul's readers Meet on Thursday, March 21 at 3 pm

Please join us in Trinity Hall on Thursday, March 21 at 3 pm as we delve into our latest selection, *The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store*, by James McBride. Lorrel Strom-Jensen is leading our group discussion.

Our book fits into several genres – best seller, historical fiction, mystery, crime, and African American literature, to name a few. It has garnered numerous “book of the year” awards from newspapers, booksellers, broadcasters, and other notables. It has been described as a boisterous hymn to community, mercy, and karmic justice. The story starts in June 1972, with the Pennsylvania State Police investigating a skeleton found at the bottom of an old well in an area marked for redevelopment. McBride then flashes back to the past, to the ‘20s and ‘30s, to explore the remains’ connections to Pottstown’s Black, Jewish, and immigrant history. But rather than a straightforward whodunit, McBride weaves an intimate tale of community.

Books for the following two months are *Death Be Not Proud* by Jon Bunther (memoir) in April and *The Madness of Crowds* by Louise Penny (mystery) in May.

Our meetings are held in Trinity Hall on the third Thursday of most months at 3 pm. It is an informal gathering to talk about our book for the month, led by a facilitator. We try to select books from different genres to stretch our horizons, as well as to appeal to a wide range of people.

Please consider joining us in March or for another of our meetings. We welcome you (men and women) to come and check us out, even if you have not read the book. If you have never taken part in a book club before, we are tailor-made for you! For questions or more information, please contact Katherine Trexler katherine.m.trexler@gmail.com.

Need a Hobby?

The Dropped Stitch Prayer Shawl Ministry



meets on the last Friday of the month at 1:00 pm in the sofa area of the atrium. This group creates prayer shawls by knitting or crochet.

The Tongue and Thimble group creates small quilts which are distributed to nurseries at local hospitals for their critical patients. They meet downstairs in the Fiber Arts/Music room off of the Genesis Hall on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month at 10:00 am-12:00 noon.

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**PASTA for PARKTOWN!!
Help Stock the St. Paul's Shelf**

The folks at Parktown Food Hub love our St. Paul's pasta! THANKS to your generosity the "St. Paul's Dry Boxed Pasta Shelf" stays stocked and ready to help hungry families. Please continue to add dry pasta to your shopping list to share with the St. Paul's shelf. The Women's Connection Group is leading this initiative to support the Parktown Food Hub, led by Pastor Sharon Schulze.

**UMD (Urban Ministries
Durham) Food Prep!**

We volunteer our services on the third Saturday of each month, 11:30 am-1:30 pm. Next date is **March 16, 2024**. During the shift, you will prep for the dinner meal and serve lunch.

Sign up online at this site: http://bit.ly/UMD_Signup
Volunteers must be 13 years old, must wear closed toed shoes and shirts that cover armpits. Hairnets and aprons are provided – you can bring a hat and apron as well. Urban Ministries is located at 410 Liberty St, Durham NC 27701. If you have any questions, please contact Amanda Anderson at andersona1129@gmail.com



**Thrivent – Rethinking Retirement Tax Planning
with Ed Slott
New Strategies to Keep More of Your Money**

Tax law changes now can affect your retirement savings and your future legacy. Join Ed Slott for a lively discussion during Rethinking Retirement Tax Planning and gain strategies you can use to help reduce or eliminate taxes now and in the future. Brunch & refreshments will be provided for registered attendees.
Event Details: Sunday, March 10, 2024 at 12:00 pm, Trinity Hall at St. Paul's. Brunch will be provided for registered attendees. Reserve your place today by signing up on the bulletin board or calling Jason Obermeier at 919-335-7400.

Spring Cleaning

It is that time again to do some Spring Cleaning and why not donate any of those clothes you no longer need or want? Between March 1st and March 31st, there will be labeled boxes available in the atrium by the conference room to drop off clothes. Each week Megan



Cunningham will collect and take them to the local Durham Rescue Mission. Whatever clothes don't sell in their thrift stores go directly to the men's, women's and children's shelters. Any questions, please reach out directly to Megan at mcunni16@gmail.com.

FREE to a Good Home Table

by Pastor Scott

We have set up a table in the hallway on the way to the elevator and I am calling it the "free to a good home table." If you own an item on the table, you have two weeks to claim it. If you'd like an item on the table, you also have two weeks to claim it. If an item is not claimed in two weeks, it will be removed from the church. We will donate or trash it. Thanks for your help in cleaning up our congregational home.

**Young In Spirit
March 13, at 11:30 am
Bring Your Own Lunch!**

Come "travel" with us to **Iceland** as Deb Tabert shares her recent trip through pictures and conversation. Did she see the Northern Lights? Did she see the erupting volcano? Join us and hear all about it!

