

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

APRIL 2024

Pastor Deb Staniszewski



SUNDAY SERVICES 8:30am and 10:00am

SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:00 – 9:45am

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

You can connect to Facebook direct or by going to our 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.



Hallelujah! Christ is Risen, Christ is Risen Indeed!

On Easter morning, we read Mark's account of the women coming to Jesus tomb and finding it empty,

16 When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. 2 Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb 3 and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?" 4 But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. 5 As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. 6 "Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. 7 But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.' 8 Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone because they were afraid." (Mark 16:1-8, NIV)

Although the women fled in fear, and they may not have said anything to anyone at that moment, we know that in due course someone talked, and eventually wrote it down. Because of these women, who demonstrated courage amid their fear, along with the other followers, we know the story of the resurrection, and the promise of eternal life in Christ which we share with them.

Scripture is filled with stories of strong, courageous, vulnerable, imperfect people whose experiences with God led them on adventures and life-paths that they could not have imagined on their own. People held up, and held tight by God, people like us who were created in God's very image.

Jesus, throughout his life and ministry demonstrated that God values us all people. Men, women, and children, people of all cultural and ethnic backgrounds, those who were marginalized by the culture, including people who were sick, poor, and ritually unclean according to the law. Jesus loved, cared for, and relied on ordinary people, just like us, as trustworthy, capable, courageous, and resilient partners in ministry. He sent people who lived on the margins out as witnesses to testify to the divine presence of God's love in their lives.

Jesus blessed and valued all members of the community. His followers worked alongside one another in unity, for the sake of making God's love known in the world. When they needed to be encouraged, he reminded them of their holy purpose, as he called them to live into the life of dignity and belovedness.

In his reflection "God is Found in All Things", on the CAC.org newsletter, posted Wednesday, July 12, 2023, Richard Rohr wrote,

"The demand for the perfect is the enemy of the possible good. Be peace and do justice, but let's not expect perfection in ourselves or the world. Perfectionism contributes to intolerance and judgmentalism and makes ordinary love largely impossible. Jesus was an absolute realist, patient with the ordinary, the broken, the weak, and those who failed."

Let us offer our thanks and praise for Jesus the Risen Christ, who values us, and who loves us fiercely with a radical grace that continues to hold and keep us no matter what.

Your Sibling in Christ,

Pastor Deb



Happy Spring from Worship & Music!

Special Thanks! – Special thanks to Pastor Deb, Barbara Edwards, Faye Jones, Edie Lansdowne, Sam Malinowitzer, Noreen Manda, Lisa Myers, Laura Pride, Nancy Rance, Dana Strohl and Manuela Tufano for your delicious offerings of soup, dessert and bread and to all those who helped set up and clean up after our Lenten Soup Suppers.

Easter – The Worship & Music committee wish to thank all those in the altar guild especially Nancy Fritz, Carol Raughley and Lynne Williams. We'd also like to thank Laura and Alan Pride, Bonnie Hasker and Lisa Flory, Edie Lansdowne, Dody Hartmann, Nancy and Andy Rance, Brooke Nixon and Steven Nixon, Ashley Tulley, Noah Smith and all the greeters, communion assistants and readers for their contributions during Holy Week services and Easter Sunday. Easter Sunday was full of great music, starting with Dave Libecap's organ and piano rendition of Beautiful Savior and the choir's anthem Risen Savior! It was great to see so many friends and feel the energy of the day!

All New – 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.

Flowers – The flower sign up sheet is on the bulletin board. Celebrate a loved one with a fresh flower arrangement from Floral Boutique. Order forms and checks may be given to Dana Strohl or Lynne Williams.

Volunteers- Sign-up sheets for service assistants are on the bulletin board. Please sign up, if you are available. Your help as an acolyte, greeter, lay reader and communion assistant is so important and most appreciated. If you have interest in leading a service on one of Pastor's Sundays when she is away, please contact Pastor.

Next Meeting – Monday, April 8th at 6:30pm. If you have any thoughts or ideas about the service or would like to join the Altar Guild or be part of the Worship & Music committee, please let Kathy Ertle or the office know.

**THANK YOU, KATHY ERTLE,
FOR SETTING UP FOR THE
LENTON SUPPERS AND ALL
THE WORK YOU DID.**



PALM SUNDAY



GOOD FRIDAY



EASTER MORNING



COUNCIL MEMBERS

Tom McGhee (Pres.)	drtmcghee@gmail.com
Laura Pride (VP)	papride94@gmail.com
Ted Strohl (Co -VP)	destrohl@ptd.net
Tracey Lasslett (Sec.)	tdimperio@lccc.edu
Joy Donnelly	donnell4@ptd.net
Faye Jones	mrspools@ptd.net
Sonji Patrick	sonjipatrick9903@gmail.com
Wanda Richardson	Jacqueline.richardson50@gmail.com

IF NEEDED:

PHONE NUMBERS ARE LISTED ON THE BULLETIN BOARD IN THE NARTHEX OR CALL THE OFFICE.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

- Individuals can contribute to the church through Paypal Donations (QR Code, link, etc.).
- Paypal Donations can be made via a contributor's Paypal account and/or through a Debit or Credit Card. The Paypal account is the most efficient for the contributor as there are less keystrokes needed.
- This option would not eliminate the regular contributions from our members such as contributions by check, cash, or ACH automatic withdrawals. This will be in addition to these options.
- The Paypal Donations can be marketed for specific events, put in the bulletin in the event we have visitors and/or members who forgot their checkbook/wallet, specific campaign fundraising, etc.
- Cost would be 1.89% of donation amount plus \$.49 per transaction. Donor has the option to pay the fee during the transaction.
- There are no ongoing expenses for this service. Only pay when the donations are made.
- Ways to donate:
 - Shareable link: https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=K8ZKNHW5V48WS
 - QR Code:



- The above options are live. Give it a shot and you can donate to the church.



APRIL FOOD PANTRY

Thursday 4th & 18th

9:30am – 12:00noon

Contact **Wanda Richardson**
with any questions.

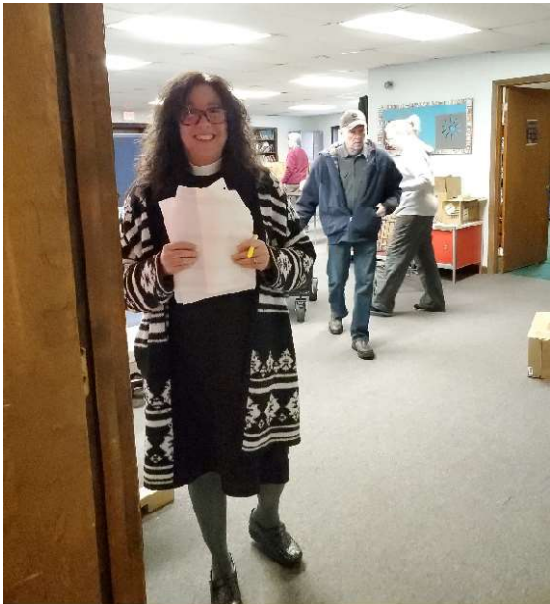
The food pantry needs: Boxed macaroni & cheese, cereal, peanut butter and jelly.

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.

EAST STROUDSBURG FIRE COMPANY FOOD DONATIONS AND HELP FROM OUR SCOUT TROOP PACK 100, and SOME OF ST. PAUL'S FINEST!



Thanks for all the help we had for the Easter Food Pantry and all the donations. We were able to provide 60 families with an Easter Dinner and a successful give away.





Hello Church Youth Families,

Sunday School 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.

Confirmation Class for this month (3-5pm):

April 14th at St. John's

April 28th at St. Paul's

Family Movie Night!

Family Movie Night date to be determined.

All are welcome! Come and join us for pizza, salad and snacks!

Touch of Home

Touch of Home packages were a success again! The children did excellent work in packing up the boxes! They very much enjoy this service project and the chance to give to others. We thank the congregation for all of the donations and support.

Mission Trip

Our Confirmation Class will be going on a Mission Trip in July to Altoona, PA. They will spend a week working on projects to repair and renovate homes for families in need and other service projects to help local residents. We are very excited about this!

Blessings always,
Christian Education Team
Alisa Nixon (908) 279-5242
Pastor Deb (570) 350-5115



FRIDAY LADIES

Friday's 9:00 – 12:00 noon



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.

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.

Blessing of the Lap Robes that Pastor delivered to

Brookmont Healthcare Center in Effort.

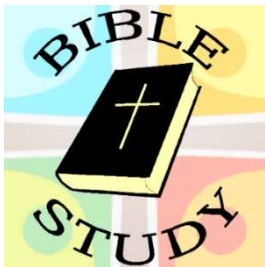


The Altar Guild is looking for a few new volunteers.



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.

April Altar Guild members are:
Nancy Fritz, Edith Lansdowne and Carol Raughley



Every Tuesday

11:30am to 12:30pm.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO JOIN

COFFEE HOUR

Looking for people to host
(helpers available)
SIGN UP SHEET ON BULLETIN BOARD
Contact Madeline or Faye with any questions



ST. PATRICKS DAY COFFEE HOUR



CELEBRATION HALL RENTALS

Please share with friends.
For information contact SONJI PATRICK (CALL OFFICE FOR PHONE #.)



Celebrate Your Event



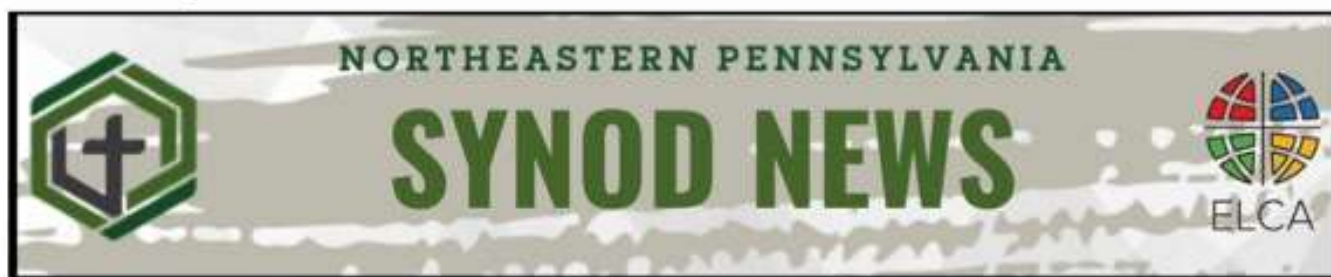
- Full Commercial Kitchen
- Seating: 160 Banquet Style
180 Assembly
- Parking: Up to 75 Vehicles
- Handicap Accessible
- Wi-Fi Ready

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



Sweet 16 Party





Just Being There: Our Alaska Experience as Sitka Lutheran Church Volunteers

By: Gail Colahan

Sitka is located on the west coast of Baranof Island in the Alaska panhandle. Most of the island lies within the limits of the Tongass National Forest, a temperate rainforest, rich with wildlife and scenic vistas. Inhabited by Tlingit for over 10,000 years, ruled by Russia starting in 1799, then transferred from Russia to the US in 1867, this island community of 8,400 people continues to reflect characteristics of these varied cultures. For over 30 years the abundance of nature, scenery and cultural heritage has attracted cruise ships to Sitka. For most of that time Sitka Lutheran Church (SLC) has supported a summer volunteer program to assist the church in being a welcoming presence amidst a burgeoning tourist presence, which numbered nearly 600,000 in 2023 when we participated as volunteers.

Flash back to June 2019 when we first visited Sitka, not as cruise passengers but as plane travelers on a self-guided tour throughout Southeast Alaska. It just so happened we were in Sitka on Sunday morning so we decided to go to worship after finding an ELCA church within walking distance of our hotel. Entering the church, we read from hallway signage that in 1840 while Sitka was a Russian colony, Finns founded SLC making it the oldest Protestant congregation on the US West Coast. Included with other historical signage hung a poster declaring "Volunteers Wanted". The sign combined with our fascination with the church's origins, its geographic location, and the history and culture of this place prompted us to make further inquiries. We learned about SLC's program inviting volunteers to come to Sitka for a month to welcome summer cruise ship visitors to SLC, with the SLC faith family providing housing and the use of a car during the volunteers' stay. Our intrigue with the idea of such an opportunity prompted us to complete an interest form despite knowing we weren't in a position at the time to make such a commitment.

Four years later we found ourselves in Sitka. Driving into town to open the church, we marveled at vistas of Sitka Sound and surrounding forest-covered land while passing marinas filled with fishing vessels. On days when large cruise ships were in port, Greg greeted visitors outside SLC's front door, enticing them with the smell of freshly popped popcorn and the query, "Did you know that Sitka Lutheran is the oldest Protestant congregation on the west coast?". Gail provided a brief overview of the church's history and pointed out historical objects from the original 1843 church for the curious who ventured inside, and at times drifted into conversations about faith and the church. All visitors received a warm welcome whether they choose to hear the church's history, find solitude in the sanctuary, take a much-needed rest break, or buy some popcorn.

While Greg often felt frustrated when people just walked by with their heads down (probably in part due to the modern façade of SLC's 3rd church building as compared to the original features of the nearby Russian Orthodox Cathedral), he did experience some gratifying encounters - a conversation with a gentleman from China who was interested in talking about the history of Sitka and well-wishers who knew about SLC's volunteer program and just wanted to say hi. On the day we transitioned with the previous volunteers, Greg stood alongside Kurt out in front of the church. A family walking by stopped and

requested a prayer for their child who had a health affliction. Kurt, an ordained pastor, knelt down close to the child in the stroller and proceeded to offer a prayer. Afterwards, the family departed in peace and Greg and Kurt shared their thankfulness in being able to honor the family's request.

On another day with few visitors in town, two seasonal shuttle bus drivers walked into the church. After Gail guided them to the sanctuary to share the church's story, the gentleman asked for time to pray. Sensing the gravity of his request, Gail invited him to stay as long as necessary and indicated she would request visitors quietly respect his being there until he was ready to leave. It was at least a half hour before he and his friend emerged from the sanctuary and shared that his sister was dying and he couldn't be with her and that his time spent in prayer in the church had been the best way for him to face the crisis. Thanks be to God.

In addition to our encounters with visitors, the people of Sitka Lutheran Church blessed us with the warmest of welcomes. Pastor Rudd shared personal and church background and introduced us to Alaska Synod's Bishop Shelly during a SLC hosted Southeast Cluster Meeting. Heather, the secretary who grew up in Sitka, assisted with everything from the latest cruise schedule updates to lending intriguing details and answers to questions about Sitka's more recent history. Sue provided a tour around town to familiarize us with the schools, hospitals, and businesses that are part of the daily life of this area and took us to a refuge for orphaned bear cubs. Paula, another parishioner, gifted us with sweet treats and invited us to her house for a grilled salmon dinner. Wayne guided us through the Alaska wilderness on a glorious hike past cascades and waterfalls to Bear Lake. Harvey and Kathleen, managers of the SLC volunteer program, provided not only a place to stay but enjoyable storytelling over meals and desserts. Even the neighbors extended their welcome with soup and muffins. We were truly humbled by the kindness, generosity, hospitality, and support we received.

Just being there was such a wonderful experience on so many levels – experiencing what it's like to be strangers welcomed into a community, serving as volunteers at SLC, living for 5 weeks on an island in a different environment, exploring the beauty and wonder of the Tongass rainforest and its wildlife, learning about the history and cultures that influenced and characterize Sitka, meeting and talking with people from around the world, and getting to know and become friends with the SLC faith family. We will never know the impact of our being there for most tourists who visited the church. However, SLC parishioners were abundantly grateful and thanked us profusely for assisting in their being a welcoming presence. We also know that the experience had a profound impact on us. Just being there we experienced so many wonderful God moments and blessings – lives touched, joy witnessed, beauty revealed, friendships made. We are so much richer for having had the opportunity to live in a different place and serve as volunteers for Sitka Lutheran Church.



Keynote Speaker: Marie Anne serves as the Senior Director for Building Resilient Communities (BRC) at the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Ms. Sliwinski has 20 years of experience working in the non-profit sector, 14 of which are dedicated in international humanitarian and development programs. Ms. Sliwinski oversees BRC, which draws together the ministries of ELCA World Hunger, Lutheran Disaster Response, AMMPARO and the ELCA's Social Ministry Organization to share knowledge, collaborate effectively, invest in new ideas and foster new opportunities for the ELCA, partners, companions and neighbors to strive together "for justice and peace in all the earth." Marie Anne holds a master's degree in international relations from the University of Chicago, and currently resides in the Chicago suburb with her husband and two children. [Register today at nepasynod.org/assembly2024/](https://nepasynod.org/assembly2024/)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
April 2024	1	2	3	4 Food Pantry 9:30am – 12:00 noon Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm	5 Friday Ladies 9:00am – 12:00noon	6
7 2nd Easter 8:30 & 10:00am Sunday School 9:00-9:45am	8 Music and Worship 6:30pm	9 Bible Study 11:30am – 12:30pm Council 7:00am	10	11 Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm	12 Friday Ladies 9:00am - 12:00noon	13
14 3rd Easter 8:30 & 10:00am Sunday School 9:00-9:45am Confirmation St. John's 3-5:00am	15	16 Bible Study 11:30am – 12:30pm	17 Praise Team Rehearsal 6:30pm	18 Food Pantry 9:30am – 12:00 noon Finance 6:00pm Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm	19 Friday Ladies 9:00am - 12:00noon	20
21 4th Lent 8:30 & 10:00am Sunday School 9:00-9:45am	22	23 Bible Study 11:30am – 12:30pm	24 Praise Team Rehearsal 6:30pm	25 Finance 6:00pm Choir Rehearsal 6:30pm	26 Friday Ladies 9:00am - 12:00noon	27
28 5th Easter 8:30-10:00am Sunday School 9:00-9:45am Confirmation St. Paul's 3-5:00pm	29	30 Bible Study 11:30am- 12:30pm				