

Cross Connections



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

March 2021

Invitation to a Holy Lent

During the Wednesdays of Lent, St. Paul's will observe Compline (Night Service) together over Zoom. Our theme, "The Fast That I Choose," is based on Isaiah 58, which asks,

*Is such the fast that I choose, a day to humble oneself? ... Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?*

*Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them,
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?*



Join us for a brief Compline service at 7:00 p.m. each Wednesday during Lent. Here is the Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81426130806?pwd=cjhoeDk5YlBvWEZZcHBibEJjVDFSZz09>

Links to the service worship bulletin, as well as the readings and preachers for each night will be sent out in emails. I hope this service will be a time for us to reflect on what it means to observe a holy Lent and will also give us an opportunity for (Zoomed) fellowship.

Blessings,
Vicar Judy

The Rev. Scott M. Anderson, Pastor
Susan Esposito, Parish Administrator & Editor
Jacqueline Nappi, Minister of Music
Amanda Stoen, Preschool Director
Judy Goans, Vicar

Alan Rigsbee, Bookkeeper

The Rev. Amanda Highben, Associate Pastor, Duke Lutherans

The Rev. Dr. Charles R. Huggins, Pastor Emeritus

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From the Pastor...

It is winter and we are in the midst of one of the wettest winters in years. So, our outdoor worship has been curtailed until after March 15. We are both recording worship for you to view and providing a live stream on Sunday mornings. We will continue to offer drive thru communion from 11:15 to noon each week. I pray as more of us get the vaccines, we will be able to gather in small groups to watch worship together and renew our fellowship.

I thought this week about what I could offer that might help you through these dreary days.

I have been reading some very good books lately and thought I might share a current reading list with you. I'd be glad to help organize a discussion of any of these if people are interested. But to begin, here is a list of some outstanding books for your Christian study, joy, and renewal. Reading something related to faith might even be a good Lenten discipline.

- ▶ Just Tell the Truth, A Call to Faith, Hope, and Courage. This book is by our own Rev. Dr. Richard Lischer and it is a collection of sermons.
- ▶ The Bible with and without Jesus, How Jews and Christians Read the Same Stories Differently, Amy-Jill Levine, and Duke professor Marc Zvi Brettler.
- ▶ They Knew They Were Pilgrims, John G. Turner. A history of the pilgrims that neither idolizes them nor demonizes them.
- ▶ Caste, the Origins of Our Discontents, Isabel Wilkerson, an examination of the caste system in the United States.
- ▶ Proud Shoes, Pauli Murray, Durham's own tells the story of her American family.
- ▶ The Case for Christ, Lee Stobel, An older book that has been around for many years. It is a journalist's personal investigation of the evidence for Jesus.
- ▶ Love Wins, Rob Bell, a loving guide to faith.
- ▶ Stations of the Heart, Rev. Dr. Richard Lischer, if you didn't read this memoir when it first came out, you missed a very fine book.
- ▶ Piranesi, Susanna Clarke, I thought I'd throw in a recommendation for a little light magical fantasy reading. This was found as a recommendation from Christian Century Magazine. I read her first novel and found it enjoyable.

So, that should give you something to do to while away the hours of winter. May you find joy in the study.

Pastor Scott

Another Way to Think About Lent

Many of us think of Lent as a season of fasting, a time when we do without food for a time, or give up something we enjoy. Some people add to the fast the idea of donating the money they would have spent on the food they gave up. They donate it to a good cause, such as feeding those who are hungry. (This, of course, doesn't work for people who fast from meat and eat lobster instead.) and fasting has an honorable history. Both Moses and Elijah fasted, and Jesus fasted during his temptation in the desert. However, there are other ways to think about the observance of Lent.

As we progress through Lent 2021, we might think of Lent as a journey or pilgrimage from where we are spiritually, to where we want to be. In 167, Puritan author John Bunyan captured this idea, which he did not restrict to Lent, in his book, *The Pilgrim's Progress from This World, to That Which Is to Come*. As Bunyan tells the story of pilgrims, we learn that the journey is not necessarily smooth. Bunyan himself spent twelve years in prison for unauthorized preaching.

One of my favorite hymns is taken from *Pilgrim's Progress*. A character named Valiant-for-truth journeys from his home in Darkland to the Celestial Country. On his way, he takes note of the difficulties of being a pilgrim. Here are two verses:

Who would true valor see,
Let him come hither;
One here will constant be,
Come wind, come weather;
there's no discouragement
shall make him once relent
His first avowed intent
To be a pilgrim.
Whoso beset him round

With dismal stories,
Do but themselves confound –
His strength the more is.
No lion can him fright;
He'll with a giant fight,
But he will have a right
To be a pilgrim.”

During this Lent, I wish you the strength to persevere in your spiritual journey, and to overcome any obstacles that stand between you and Jesus. And I hope to see you on Wednesday nights for our Lenten Compline services.

Blessings to all,
Vicar Judy Goans

Duke Lutherans Special Lenten Offering – Blessing Bags and Grace House Day of Celebration



Thanks to a generous Thrivent Action Team grant, the Duke Lutherans are now able to care for our Grace House friends whom we haven't been able to see since COVID first struck last spring. Because this

ministry is rooted in table fellowship and building Christ-like relationships of mutual love and support, we are assembling Blessing Bags, including grocery gift cards (thus giving our friends the freedom of meeting their specific needs, as some of them are facing unemployment due to COVID and others are still trying to process immigration for their families). We also plan to include personal notes of encouragement/prayer and to purchase other helpful items, such as hygiene supplies and masks.

However, rather than simply give these items to our neighbors, we are planning an outdoor, socially-distanced Day of Celebration at the Grace House on Saturday, April 17. Although we still can't eat together, this will still be a time to renew our friendships, pray together, and look forward in hope to the good things God still has in mind for us.

If you would like to contribute to the Blessing Bags and help make the Day of Celebration possible, please consider giving to our Duke Lutherans Special Lenten Offering. You can either mail a check to St. Paul's with Grace House in the memo line or click on the Giving Online link on St. Paul's website. Once there, enter the amount in the Misc. Other line and type "Grace House" in the designated space.

God's Peace,
Pastor Amanda

Council Corner

by Claire Cooney, President

Greetings from St. Paul's Congregational Council! As we embark on our Lenten journey this month, the Council has been focused on adapting to what our time together looks like in the future. We are investigating new camera equipment for the Sanctuary – we know that recording services won't stop after COVID lifts and this will be an important connection for those unable to join in-person. From our last Council meeting, we celebrate that our mortgage refinance has gone through; the PPP loan has been forgiven; and we

have a new part-time bookkeeper, Alan Rigsbee. The Council approved the installation of bee hives on the property – more details on this soon. Council is also reviewing the Church's personnel manual and prepping for this June's Synod Assembly. As always, please feel free to reach out to council@stpaulsdurham.org with questions or ideas.

Preschool Pitter Patter

by Amanda Stoen



February was a cold and wet month! The weather really challenged our ability to be outside as much as possible but our teachers persevered and we made it through the cold, wet days. The preschool teachers are a dedicated and flexible team who has worked together, at a social distance, to

support each other and their classes. I am grateful to have such a strong team to work with each day. Please keep us and all educators in your prayers this school year. It is definitely a challenging year for teachers, students, and their parents.

As our preschool children continue to learn through active play, here is another stimulating activity that children of all ages enjoy – playdough!

When I play with playdough, I learn...

- ▶ Concepts of shapes, sizes, length and height
- ▶ To see negative space when shapes are taken away
- ▶ To express feelings, especially negative ones, with squeezing and pounding
- ▶ That the quality of something remains the same even when the shape changes

We have a few more spots remaining in our PMO and Twos classes for the 2021-2022 school year.

Registration forms and enrollment procedures can be found on our website:

www.stpaulspreschooldurham.weebly.com. Please contact me if you are interested in learning more about our preschool program.

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Our Sympathy

We offer prayers of sympathy to the families and friends of our members who have died.

Audrey Pearson, died at Croasdaile on Tuesday, February 9, 2021. She was interred in the Columbarium, with family present and Pastor Scott Anderson presiding.

Blanche Brewer Bragg died on February 13, 2021 at Croasdaile. There was a service of Commendation in the Columbarium, with family present and Pastor Scott Anderson presiding.

In the mailbag...

*Dear Members of St. Paul's Lutheran Church,
My thanks go out to everyone from St. Paul's who remembered us in prayer, sent beautiful cards and called to check in on me during Dad's short illness and passing. Bill and Ruth Jewett are back together again! Remember them when you hear a sentimental piano tune or see a paper doily. Hallelujah!
Melissa Jewett*

Memorial Donations

We thank the following persons for their donations given to our Memorials Funds in memory of those indicated. Thank you.

In memory of Addie Sturgeon, Carol Sackett, Jim Sackett, Kaaren Johanson, Nancy Clendaniel, Seth Kitange, Ted Watson, Ruth Boynton, Frieda Hahn, Sonja Bock, and Bill Jewett by Ellen and Kevin Lavery, Durham

In memory of Kaaren Johnson by Muriel H. Smith, Richmond, VA

In memory of Leonard Dominick by Ted and Diana Dominick, Durham

St. Paul's Readers

Join the discussion of Too Smart for God, by Dave Simpson, via zoom on Thursday, March 18 at 3:00 pm.

The book for April is Garlic and Sapphires, by Ruth Reichl.

Attention Golfers!!!!

What a great way to practice Social Distancing!! Standing roughly 3 feet away from a GOLF BALL on a Golf course in Cary, NC.

The Camp Agape Kure Beach Ministries Golf Tournament is GO for 2021. It takes place on Monday, April 19th at the Lochmere Golf Club in Cary.

We unfortunately can't have a Shotgun start due to COVID sticking around but tee times will be starting at 8:30 AM. Details will be made available as we gain more info. Primary cost is \$90.00 per person of \$350.00 per foursome registered. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Warren Pusak at wrpusak@aol.com or by cell phone at 919-219-4090. If I should not happen to answer when you call, please leave a message and I will get back to you as soon as possible.

It's a great reason to get out of the house – Camperships for Youth whom can't afford to go to Bible Camp. In past years, we have sent 50-60 kids to Camp when ordinarily they couldn't have gone. It's great fellowship and if all else fails, IT BEATS GOING TO WORK!!!

Thank you in advance and I look forward to hearing from you and I would be glad to get you set up with a great group of folks. After my first year playing back in 2005 I was hooked. Personally, I have been on the Golf Committee for now 16 years. It has been an honor to be involved and I look forward to getting out there again this year.

Warren Pusak
Camp Agape Kure Beach Golf Committee

