

Cross Connections



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

June 2023

Holy Curiosity

A few weeks ago, the four-year-old preschool class asked me, "What's the difference between God and Jesus?" The Fours are theologically curious. In our time together, we've had silly discussions on if God is capable of making coffee rain down from heaven (all the adults said, "Please, Lord, amen!"), analytical debates on how God can be in heaven and on earth at the same time, and difficult conversations such as why babies sometimes die inside Mommy's tummy. This inquisitive group just graduated from preschool yesterday and are ready to take kindergarten by storm. Let's all take a moment to pray for their teachers.

I believe that curiosity is a holy gift. It cultivates openness to learning and growth, awakens possibilities for deepening relationships, and holds space for wonder and mystery. One of the most faith-filled actions we can take as Christians is to get curious: with ourselves, with one another, with the whole of creation, and with God.

June is a good month for getting curious. We are living in the season after Pentecost, the day we remember Holy Spirit descending on Jesus' first disciples and the birth of the Church. On the first Sunday in June, we celebrate the Holy Trinity. That's a mountain range of mystery all on its own! And the last Sunday in June is the anniversary of the presentation of the Augsburg Confession, the foundational confession of faith for Lutherans around the world. It's composed of the many inquiries of early Lutheran theologians, people who asked important questions about who and what God is and how we live the Christian life.

What questions do you bring to your faith?

What questions do you pose to God?

This summer, let's engage in holy curiosity as we seek to grow with God and neighbor.

Vicar Amanda Spangler



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From the Pastor...

June always marks the beginning of summer for us at the church and it is a time to reflect and catch up on things that need to be taken care of here at St. Paul's.

We are realizing that the "new" building is now on its 14th year of existence. Lots of commercial equipment is designed to be obsolete much quicker than it used to be. So, we are now watching our equipment closely and we have experienced some failures. Our fire alarm system is experiencing some challenges and we have had a bid to replace the alarm monitoring equipment. Soon we will have to pay out over \$9,000 to replace the alarm box and our two annunciators that monitor our detectors throughout the building. They do not make parts to repair our system after 14 short years and so the main panel will have to be replaced.

We are continuing to look for ways to care for the environment. One of the things we'd like to change is communion cups. We currently use plastic disposable cups and we are working to find recyclable cups, but they are hard to find and expensive. We are also working with a company called saintsaver.com that offers dishwasher safe trays and glass communion cups, but we'd have to wash cups every Sunday and that means people power. So, if you'd like to help with the Altar Guild and even just agree to wash cups at the end of the 11 am worship service on Sundays, we might be able to move in the direction of glass communion ware. However, it will take a group of people willing to wash and then to help us design storage and new ways of collecting used cups. Going green is not easy, but important.

In addition, our icemaker continues to require regular maintenance and in the next year or so we may have to replace it. We still have a 30 year old roof over Whitesell Hall and one more 30 year old HVAC system. As I said, we have to monitor and plan.

Summer is also time to plan for the fall. I would love to have some help for Betty Hinshaw and Carole Ostrowski who teach our children during Sunday School. Summer is a good time to learn from Betty and Carole and plan to help out in the fall.

We would also love to have some bus drivers to pick up members for worship and special events. Our bus does not require a commercial driver's license and we can get you trained to use the vehicle.

So, if you are able to answer God's call to serve in any ways that would help, your church family would appreciate it.

Pastor Scott

Preschool Pitter Patter

by Amanda Stoen

It is developmentally necessary for children to experiment with limits in order to establish a sense of self (what is me and not me) and discover what behaviors are appropriate. Children, still developing their own sense of autonomy, often need to assert themselves when they hear an adult command.



We can help children fulfill our expectations while still encouraging their autonomy by offering two positive choices instead of giving an assertive command. This happens when there is a choice. When

walking in a parking lot, there is not a choice to hold a parent's hand but a child may choose the right or

left hand. Sometimes there is not a choice such as wearing a coat outside when it's cold. Perhaps a child can choose which coat or which arm to put on first.

Offering two positive choices helps children upshift from an emotional state to an executive state where the problem-solving and decision making occur. After your child makes a choice, notice the choice he picked and follow up with some form of encouragement.

In May, we celebrated the end of preschool with our Fours Class. Through their play, they learned how to be a helpful and kind friend. They learned perseverance, developed critical thinking skills and explored our natural world. We hope that each

graduate – Ariel, Blades, Lucy, Maeve, Quinn, Rosie, Rowan and Vera – will remember how loved they are by all of us here at St. Paul’s Preschool & PMO. Please pray for these children and their families as we send them off into a new stage of learning.

St. Paul’s Readers on Summer Break

St. Paul’s Readers is on summer hiatus until September. That most certainly does not mean that we are no longer reading, but rather using the long days to savor our books even more. Recent books in my collection have moved me profoundly – prompted shifts in my thinking, made me less strident, and offered points of view that I had never considered. Fictional characters gave me insight into situations that I never encountered, educating me as to why people might make choices or take actions outside the norm.



St. Paul's Readers

The book club encourages all to set some sort of reading goal to achieve over the next few months. If you are interested in what we are reading this fall, here are our selections:

- ▶ September 21 – *Don Quixote* by Miguel de Cervantes, translation by Edith Grossman
- ▶ October 19 – *Judas* by Amos Oz (novel)
- ▶ November 16 - *Horse* by Geraldine Brooks

We hope to finalize our books for 2024 by the end of October and welcome suggestions at any time. Please consider joining us for any or all our meetings. We strive to be full of thought as well as thoughtful readers. Contact Katherine Trexler (katherine.m.trexler@gmail.com) with any questions.

In the mail...

Many thanks to all the folks who have helped me during my recent stays in the hospital and rehab centers and those who are continuing to help. I really appreciate your prayers, cards, food, flowers, gifts, cleanups and drivers. You are a big help, and I love y'all. Thanks again.

Judy Schlegel



Dear Pastor Scott and congregation of St. Paul’s,
I write to say thank you for the honor of preaching on April 30 to kick off St. Paul’s 100th Anniversary celebrations. What a joy it was to be back and to see so many familiar faces – and some new ones as well!

I have also been reminded of how much you cared for me as I made my way through Duke Div School, Lutheran year in Phila., and internship in Waltham, MA. You are a congregation that takes seriously the call to teaching and raising up new leadership for the church.

Many blessings to you all –
Pastor Ann Sundberg

Memorials Received

A Memorial has been given by Mary Sturgeon to the St. Paul’s Library in memory of her parents.

Wheeler Book Reading and Q&A

Retired ELCA pastor, the Rev. Dr. Kenneth W. Wheeler, long-time friend and colleague of the NC Synod’s Racial Justice Network, will be in NC in June to share his story and discuss his newly-published book. He will offer a Book Reading and Q&A at **St. Paul’s, Durham, on Saturday, June 10, at 2:00 p.m.** He will share his experience as a Black pastor in a majority-White denomination in hopes of helping us all to grow in love and justice together, freeing us from the evil of White supremacy. If you want to help the ELCA become a more just and inclusive church, if you want to celebrate Pastor Wheeler’s gift to this church, or if you simply want to honor his courage in sharing his story, please come. Order *US: The Resurrection of American Terror* from Amazon or Barnes&Noble.

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Summer Worship Schedule

This summer we will stay with two worship services, at 8:30 and 11:00 am. The 8:30 worship will be using "Now the Feast and Celebration" worship books, and the 11:00 will continue to use the Setting Five booklets from the ELW. The 8:30 worship will be in-person only, the 11:00 service will be in-person, live-streamed, and recorded. This will take effect on June 4 and continue through August.

Ordination of Mac Mullins



By the grace of God, Vr. Mac Mullins has been called as Pastor in Residency to St. Paul Lutheran Church Quad Cities in Davenport, IA. The residency program at St. Paul is a two-year term call in which new pastors receive one-on-

one mentoring, professional development, and the chance to work in a large, established church at the beginning of their ministry. Vr. Mac's ordination will be held on Saturday, June 17, 2023 at 11:00 am at St. Paul's Durham. He will begin at St. Paul Quad Cities in mid-August. All members of St. Paul's Durham are invited to attend and celebrate with Vr. Mac. A very special thanks to the Internship Committee and everyone at St. Paul's who have supported Vr. Mac in his ministry!

Growing thru Grief

The meetings continue each week at St. Paul's. Meetings are on Tuesday, with registration at 4:00 pm. First time attendees must show proof of Covid vaccination and booster(s). Masks are encouraged. We ask people to come at 4; the program begins at 4:30,

and all will end by 6. Everyone is welcome. Please contact admin@growingthrugrief.org if you have any questions.

Thursday Bible Study will take a summer break June 8 through August.

Come meet the bees and harvest honey!

On June 11 after each service, you're invited to Trinity Hall to look out at St. Paul's two beehives. Bill



Gresham, Theresa Oertel, and Tina Bessias will answer all your questions. If the weather is good, we'll show you how to approach the hives safely and observe the comings and goings of these new and numerous members of the congregation! After the 11:00 service, we'll begin the honey harvest. Stop by briefly or settle in to lend a hand. We'll be glad to show you how to remove cappings from honey cells and spin the extractor!

All ages are welcome.

Sign-Up Genius Links

Please visit the Sign-Up Genius links which we use to enable volunteers to fill in where needed, for both services. Click on the link and fill in your name on the date(s).

◆ **Sunday Worship**
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0944a4a72fa5f58-sunday1>

Sign up for: lector, worship assistant, and ushers. Staff will be glad to provide guidance for any of these tasks.

◆ **Sunday morning Communion Assistants and Lock-Up**
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0944a4a72fa5f58-communion>

◆ **Devotions –**
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c044eabad28a3fd0-daily1>

Send your devotions to Vicar Amanda Spangler-
vicar@stpaulsdurham.org