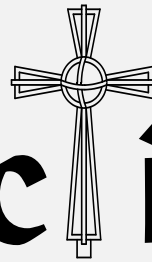


Cross Connections



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

December 2021



ADVENT WEDNESDAY NIGHT SERVICES

Holy Darkness: Advent Midweek Worship

"The theme of this service embraces the darkness of these long Advent nights as a place where we encounter the beauty and mystery of God. While darkness has sometimes been used as a negative foil for light ... our scripture and assembly song is filled with imagery in which the darkness is filled with the glory of God" (Sundays and Seasons, Year C 2022).

As the Calendar year nears its end, the Church's year begins anew in Advent as we wait for the Christ child and the coming of the Lord. All are welcome to join us this Advent for midweek worship at 7 pm as the Duke Lutherans lead a contemplative service of word and prayer. Although each week will highlight a unique theme and Scripture passage, all of the services will be woven together by simple, meditative music, dimmed lights and candlelight, moments of silence, and artwork depicting the interplay of light and darkness.

- Week 1, Dec 1: Darkness is Holy (Genesis 1:1-19)
- Week 2, Dec. 8: Darkness is Beautiful (Song of Solomon 1:2-6)
- Week 3, Dec 15: Darkness Holds Promise (1 Samuel 3)
- Week 4, Dec. 22: Darkness Holds God (Matthew 1:18-24)

Worship will be offered in-person in the sanctuary and via Zoom: Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88951832300?pwd=QVpOTWVYWU1SQVcyZkdodEJiR3JBQT09>

Meeting ID: 889 5183 2300 Passcode: 643687

We hope you'll join your siblings in Christ for Advent midweek worship this season, as together we wait, long, and hope for the newborn king in the manger and the Creator of the darkness and the light.



Christmas Eve Worship Services

Friday, December 24, 2021

4:00 pm – Family service

7:00 pm – Candlelight service with special music

10:00 pm – Candlelight service

All services will celebrate Holy Communion



The Rev. Scott M. Anderson, Pastor
Susan Esposito, Parish Administrator & Editor
Kathleen Stanford, Interim Organist
Mac Mullins, Vicar
Amanda Stoen, Preschool Director
Alan Rigsbee, Bookkeeper
The Rev. Amanda Highben, Associate Pastor, Duke Lutherans
The Rev. Dr. Charles R. Huggins, Pastor Emeritus

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Facebook: St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, ELCA

From the Pastor...

The calendar year is winding down and I can't believe it is time to write the December newsletter article. This also means it will soon be time to write the year end report for the congregation's Annual Report. For those of you that participate or lead groups within the church, please make a decision on who will write your report and plan to submit it right after the New Year.

Advent devotional books will be available beginning the week of November 21st.

As we begin Advent and plan for the upcoming Christmas season, I want to make you all aware of some changes to the schedule this year.

First and foremost, we will hold three (3) Christmas Eve Services. The 4 pm will again put emphasis on the children, with gift bags, the retelling of the Christmas story and a service of Holy Communion. We will for the first time in a couple of years, host a 7 pm and 10 pm worship with Holy Communion. We will stream and record the 7 pm worship and are working on a brass ensemble and hope to have some members of the choir sing.

Unfortunately, we will not be producing a Children's Christmas program this year, but my plan is for this to be the last year that this is the reality.

We have once again secured funding for the Vicar program for 2022-23 academic year, thanks to a gift from one of our members' family foundations. This is a blessing.

Sunday, December 26th will be our annual Lessons and Carols worship. We will also move the Epiphany service from January 6 to Sunday, January 9. I know the January announcement is premature, but wanted you to be prepared to join us for this service of light and hope.

Please watch for the Angel Tree at the end of November. Once again, the Women's Connection is working with Parktown Food Hub this year and securing gift cards for families and children in need. Thank you ladies.

I give thanks for the faithful that continue to gather at St. Paul's and those that watch the service online. We are blessed to stay connected in these difficult times.

May the God of peace, grant you all a measure of God's peace this season.

Pastor Scott

From the Vicar...

This past month, Pr. Amanda and the Duke

Lutherans invited me to join them on a Pilgrimage of Pain and Hope here in Durham. The pilgrimage, hosted by DurhamCares and Duke Chapel, was a weekend-long intentional journey through much of the pain African Americans and other racial minorities have experienced in our city. We started Friday evening at Stagville plantation, one of the largest that existed in the country, to learn about and stand on the ground where so much suffering and horror happened to the thousands of enslaved persons that were brought there. Of those thousands, less than four people are known to have escaped. Saturday was spent walking through downtown Durham, visiting sites like M&F Bank, the Carolina Theatre, and NC Mutual Life Tower to see where African Americans fought for their rights and strived to build a better life for themselves, their families, and their community. As we heard from local leaders and heard their stories throughout the afternoon, I began to see and experience the hope and joy that existed in the midst of all their pain and hardship.

Christmas can be a mixture of these two experiences for us, joy and sorrow. Despite our festive decorations, jolly carols, and lots and lots of cookies, the Christmas season can bring back grief for families who have lost loved ones. Those who live alone or are separated from loved ones by distance feel that separation just a little bit more acutely. But the message of Christmas is that our God chooses to experience all of these things with us by becoming truly human. When we remember and celebrate the Incarnation of Jesus this Christmas, our joy and praise will be as much about a God who lives and feels our own pains, suffering, and loss as it will be about the coming of our promised Savior. The incarnate God that is Jesus was and is with the African American community of Durham just as Jesus is with each of us here and now in our own lives and hardships. I do not know why God doesn't just rid the world of everything that causes hurt. But we do know, and we do have hope, that we are not alone in our God who chooses to be with us, Emmanuel. And certainly, for that, we can say Thanks be to God!

A very blessed Christmas to you all,
Vr. Mac

Dare to Hope with the Duke Lutherans

We have been so grateful for life together this year ... for shared meals at common tables; friendships new and old; voices lifted together in prayer and song; good conversations over (lots!) of coffee; and for

God's unfailing love that has sustained us through the journey.



Rev. Dr. Mary Hinkle Shore, Dean of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, our guest preacher for Reformation Sunday Evening Prayer

THIS is campus ministry, and we are so blessed to be called to this time and place.

Thank you to everyone who makes our ministry possible! Your

generous support ensures that Duke Lutherans students:

- develop life-giving relationships with their siblings in Christ, campus pastor, and members of St. Paul's and Grace;
- deepen in faith and grow in understanding of God through worship, Bible study, and honest dialogue with their peers;
- embrace their identities as beloved children of a faithful God who is with them always;
- identify their God-given gifts for leadership and ministry;
- live as instruments of peace, justice, and reconciliation.



Sunday Evening Fellowship Dinner

For over 80 years, Duke Lutherans has walked with students and young adults through the joys and challenges of campus life and young adulthood.

We have rooted them in our rich Lutheran Christian tradition and nurtured them to become lifelong followers of Christ. But we can't do this work without you! The ministry of Duke Lutherans depends entirely upon the charitable gifts of individuals and organizations, and does not receive funding from Duke University.

That is why we have launched the **Dare to Hope Matching Campaign**, based on Romans 5:5: "Hope does not disappoint us because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us."

Thanks to the support from a generous anonymous donor, we have \$40,000 in support that we are challenging you to help us match. Until December

31st, a generous matching gift donor will double any increase in one-time gifts over your previous gift and all new recurring monthly gifts. We invite you to:

1. Consider the impact the Duke Lutherans has had on your life or the lives of others.
2. Consider the amount you could give, either now or each month.
3. Go online www.gifts.duke.edu/ to make a one-time gift or set up a recurring gift, or mail a check to St. Paul's payable to Duke Lutherans.

Please consider making a gift to the Dare to Hope Campaign before the end of the year, and thank you in advance for your generosity and partnership in the Gospel.

God's Peace,

Rev. Amanda L. Highben, Campus Pastor
612-418-4192 amanda.highben@duke.edu

Preschool Pitter Patter

by Amanda Stoen



I continue to be amazed by our preschool staff and their abilities to navigate teaching preschool during this ongoing pandemic. We continue to focus on



flexibility, grace and community within our preschool so that we can support each other and our preschool families. I am so grateful for the daily work of the teachers to provide a safe, loving and nurturing environment to support the needs of each child. I am also very grateful for the spaces that St. Paul's provides for the preschool to use, both inside and out. We are spending more time outside this year and will continue to do so as we head into the winter months.



Throughout the month of November our classes learned about many animals we see in nature such as owls, squirrels, frogs, turtles/tortoises and insects. We are fortunate to



see many different creatures during our school day outside. Check out the photos of our Fours Class making their turtle/tortoise shells and using natural elements with soft dough. Our Threes Class loves to make owl cakes and used leaves and sticks to make a leaf person, leaf dog and leaf fish. Our teachers provide many open ended

activities to support children's imagination and cooperation between the children.

In January, we will begin enrollment for Fall 2022. We will be offering classes for children ages 10 months - 4 years old. If you are interested or know of anyone who is, registration forms will be available and phone/virtual tours will begin in January. Church members receive priority registration which will begin on January 5. If you have any questions in the meantime, please let me know.

Finance Committee Update

by John Foreman

Chairperson of Finance Committee

As the Church fiscal year winds down, I am taking this opportunity to update the congregation on our financial position as of the end of October. We have received \$481,514 in pledges, loose offering, use of the church, and other sources of income to date. Even in these challenging times, giving has been close to what we estimated when the budget was approved last December. However, a higher level of giving was projected for the last two months as in years past to achieve a total income of \$603,923. We will see if that happens.

Expenses to date are somewhat under what we predicted at \$481,785 and almost match income. Hopefully, income and expenses will continue the same trend and we will end the year without spending more than our income. As chair of the finance committee, I do urge you to review your 2021 pledge and fulfill it, if possible, by the end of the year. On behalf of the Finance Committee, I thank the congregation for their continued support of St. Paul's ministries.

Dialogues on Race Study Group

by Bee Ellertson

The NC Synod has provided a curriculum for a

seven-week program called "Dialogues on Race" and encourages members of St. Paul's to form small study groups to explore it. In January 2022, the Continuing Conversation Group will post sign-up sheets, we hope that you will join us as we start this study in March. This Bible-based curriculum is designed to foster reflection, communication, and insights; there are also creative exercises to help us imagine strategies and tools to use after the study period has concluded.

Each participant will have their own copy of the study curriculum with short readings to review for each week. Two CCG members have already attended the Synod training for facilitators; if more than ten people sign up, we'll form two groups with a facilitator leading each one.

To quote from the introduction: "It's not news to anyone that we are living in a time of conflict, division, and disagreement. We are at risk of becoming 'stuck' in an 'us-versus-them' divide." Come join us as we learn to listen to all perspectives, honor our fellowship as brothers and sisters, and work toward ways to build bridges across any divides during this challenging time.

Look for sign-up sheets in January; the course lasts seven weeks; each meeting will take between 60 and 75 minutes, preferably in person. If you would like to review the curriculum in advance, please send a note to Bee Ellertson or Alta Lindsay. We hope you'll be able to study with us and help us grow together in faith and community.

Thank you

Dear St. Paul's Family,

We have been so touched by your outpouring of cards, notes, and calls during these sad days as we mourn the death of our 5 year old granddaughter Allison.

As our family continues to live with our loss and sorrow, we appreciate your continued prayers.

Thank you,

Phil and Sally Hart

Welcome New Babies

We welcome Loulie Savilla Smith, granddaughter of Nancy and Mark Dewhirst. Loulie was born in Denver, CO on Sunday, Oct 10.

We welcome Elise Lock, daughter of Susannah and Ben Lock, who was born on Sunday, November 7. She weighed 9 lb. 4 oz. She has a 6 year old sister, Charlotte. Grandparents are Jane and John Hurlburt.

Memorials Received

We thank the following persons for their generous donations to our Memorials Fund.

- ✚ In memory of Lois Kinzie to the Music Ministry Fund by the following persons:
Elizabeth Coyle, Lancaster PA
Rachel Harter and Dick Havill, Chapel Hill
Ted and Diana Dominick, Durham
Marcia and Dean Redman, Chapel Hill
Robin Winfree, Durham
Cindy Snyder, Durham
Karl and Ottilie Freundt, Durham
- ✚ In memory of Allison Hart to Memorials Fund by Robin Winfree, Durham
- ✚ In memory of Leon Bowman to Memorials Fund by Kim Woolley, Rougemont
- ✚ In memory of Seth Kitange to the General Fund by John and Jane Hurlburt, Durham

All Saints Sunday

On Sunday, November 7 at the 10 am Worship, we remembered the saints of St. Paul's who have died since last All Saints Sunday in 2020. We prayed for:

Bonnie Marple

Bill Jewett

Audrey Pearson

Blanche Brewer Bragg

Oscar Yayo

Leon Bowman

Lois Kinzie

as well as all the saints in our lives and in all the world, aloud or quietly in our hearts.



Our prayers of sympathy to the family and friends of David Dahl, son of Gary and Sue Dahl, who died on Sunday, November 7, 2021 in Winston-Salem. His funeral service was

held on Monday, November 15 at 11:00 am at St. Leo's Catholic Church, 335 Springdale Ave., Winston-Salem with the Committal at St. Paul's Columbarium also on Monday, November 15 at 4:00 pm.

Funeral for Lois Kinzie

The funeral service for Lois Kinzie will be held at St. Paul's on Saturday, November 27 at 1:00 pm with interment in the Columbarium immediately following the service.

All the Details! Parktown Food Hub Christmas Giveaway 2021

The Parktown Food Hub Christmas Giveaway is coming up and there are many ways you can help:

- **Sponsor a child (or more than one child!)** - Families are signing up now and will be available for "adoption" starting on 11/3/21. If there are people in your group who would like to sponsor a child, please have them contact Pastor Sharon at parktownhub@gmail.com.
- **Help with preparations:** On the bulletin board in the atrium, is the schedule of dates when Parktown will be receiving and sorting gifts, signing cards that accompany the food cards, wrapping gifts (there is ALWAYS somebody who brings unwrapped gifts), checking gifts to make sure they are appropriate for the child, tagging gifts so that all gifts for a single family are together, and a variety of other things that come up in a large undertaking like this. It's always a fun time and we appreciate all the help we can get.
- **Special arrangements for groups:** If your group would like to volunteer together, take up a collection and make a single cash donation, or deliver gifts as a group just let me know. We *love* accommodating groups and are happy to work with you.

At the Parktown Food Hub we say that when there is abundance there is enough for everyone, and that is true in this case, too. Families and children are blessed with gifts but volunteers often tell us how much participating has enhanced their own holiday celebrations.

Thank you for helping!

Pastor Sharon Schulze

The Women's Connections group at St. Paul's is participating in the Parktown Food Hub Christmas Giveaway 2021 in the following way:

There will be a Christmas tree in the atrium beginning on Sunday, November 21 which will be decorated with envelopes. You may "choose an envelope – purchase the gift card and return it in the provided envelope." They may be returned to the offering plate, or put in the Finance Office wall slot in the staff hallway. There will be instructions posted by the Tree. The cards will need to be returned to St. Paul's by

December 9 at which time they will be delivered to the Parktown Food Hub Christmas Giveaway.



St. Paul's Lutheran Church, ELCA
1200 West Cornwallis Road
Durham, NC 27705-5731

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Vicar Sermon Feedback/Evaluation

by Wendy Waugh
Internship Committee Chair

When teaching a Vicar, the most important people are the lay people of the congregation. Pastors spend the vast majority of their time interacting with lay people, not other clergy. Pastors preach to lay people, not other pastors. A Vicar especially needs sermon feedback from lay people. A Vicar needs to know how well she/he is communicating with lay people in order to become an effective pastor. As a lay person you don't need theological knowledge or education to give the most important sermon feedback. Honest feedback given in the spirit of helping the Vicar learn is vital. You are more than qualified, you are most important when teaching the Vicar to be a great preacher and pastor. You may use the formal sermon evaluation form available from Vicar Mac or just email your comments to the Vicar.

Thank you for your help in educating Vicar Mac to be a great pastor.

Council Corner



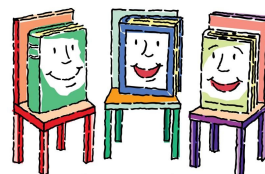
by Claire Cooney, President

Please mark your calendars for the annual Congregational meeting on **Sunday, December 12 at 11:30 am**. We will offer a hybrid option: Trinity Hall will be open to join in-person

and we will live zoom the meeting. We'll vote on new Council members (Joan Albright, Megan Cunningham, and Jim Klausman), and approve the budget for 2022. We will circulate items for this meeting in advance. Please make it a priority to attend this important time together. Thank you!

St. Paul's Readers

During the month of December, our church book club takes a holiday break. We are currently finalizing our 2022 reading list. The January



St. Paul's Readers

book is *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI* by David Frann. The book chronicles one of the most chilling conspiracies in American history. Members of the Osage Nation in the 1920s were the richest people in the world. Then, one by one, they began to be killed off. The newly created FBI was called upon to unravel these mysterious deaths. Barb Shade will lead the discussion on Thursday, January 20.

St. Paul's Readers meet at 3 pm on the third Thursday of the month in Trinity Hall. Please consider participating. We welcome all readers – men and women! Contact Katherine Trexler (katherine.m.trexler@gmail.com) with any questions.

Attention St. Paul's Singles

by Megan Cunningham

A new bible study will be starting December 2, 2021 and going for six weeks until January 13, 2022 (skipping the week of Christmas), on Thursday evenings from 7 to 8 pm in Trinity Hall. We will be discussing topics about being single and how God and God's word can help navigate our path. We will have a different topic each week that has a corresponding bible story and questions. Each Sunday before our Thursday meeting the group will get their prep information so we can get to know each other and the word more in depth. If you feel the calling to join me and other of God's single children, please reach out to me at mcunni16@gmail.com so I can get an estimated number of people. I look forward to getting to know more singles in the church and how we can grow together. God Bless all.