

Cross Connections



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

August 2023

Wednesday Night Suppers Return!

Plan to join us on Wednesday, August 16 at 6:00 pm for our Summertime Sandwich and Salad Spread. Menu will include egg salad, ham salad, cold cut meats and cheese, salads, breads, sides, with lots of condiments and add-ons. And of course the meal won't be complete without desserts such as cupcakes and ice cream novelties. This will be our kick-off of Wednesday Night Suppers, being held on the third Wednesday of the month at 6:00 pm in Trinity Hall. Time to put them on your calendars!



Ways to Help the Parktown Food Hub

▶ PASTA for PARKTOWN!!

Please continue to help stock the "Pasta Shelf" at Parktown Food Hub. It would be helpful if you could add a package – or two – of dry pasta to your shopping cart to support this important community ministry and keep the St. Paul's Pasta Shelf well stocked. Place donations in the collection box by the bulletin board. The Women's Connection Group is leading this initiative to support the Parktown Food Hub, a ministry of South Durham Connections, led by Pastor Sharon Schulze.



▶ Do you machine shred your documents and papers?

If so, we have another way to help the Parktown Food Hub. They use shredded paper in their compost piles and it takes quite a bit. St. Paul's will accept closed bags of shredded paper only on the first Sunday of the month. The program will be evaluated every month to see how it is going and if they need as much in the cooler months. So, if you have some, bring it August 6.

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

Alan Rigsbee, Bookkeeper

Amanda Stoen, Preschool Director

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

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

FROM THE PASTOR...

We are in the midst of Ordinary Time. That's that long season where the paraments are green and the flowers are colorful. I don't usually dwell on ordinary time much as it just seems – well – ordinary. But someone asked me a few Sundays ago, why do we call this time in the midst of summer doldrums ordinary.

So, for lack of something else to write, I thought it might be fun to talk about this season.

Ordinary time is part of the liturgical year and comes twice a year. Once after the season of Christmas and prior to Lent and then the long season from the end of the season of Easter to Christ the King Sunday.

The word "ordinary" as used for this season comes from the ordinal numbers by which the weeks are identified or counted.

The Sundays and weeks of Ordinary time take us through the life of Christ. This is the time of conversion and of living the life of Christ with Christ.

Ordinary time is a time for growth and maturity. It is a time in which the mystery of Christ is called to penetrate ever more deeply into the history of all things.

For me, Ordinary time is also a time of sadness and joy. August means that the Vicar (Amanda Spangler this year) we have had with us for a year has just departed. This is always a sad time. I've come to enjoy the collegial relationship that develops over a year and I've come to rely on their gifts and questions to keep life fresh and challenging. The year goes by quickly and yet we develop deep relationships with our vicars. So, Ordinary time becomes a time to grieve. But, it is also a time to anticipate the joy of the arrival of our new Vicar. Gina Schaefer will arrive mid-month. She will bring unique gifts and unique challenges, as all Vicars do. So, ordinary this season is not. It is a season to walk with Jesus and see how Jesus lived and learn what Jesus has to teach. It is a time to see the rhythm of life in the cycle of internship.

I want to take a moment to also thank the outgoing intern committee: Curtis Chi, Wendy Waugh, Kathryn Trexler, Linda Foreman, Mark Dewhirst and Marcia Redman. This year, Wendy and Kathryn rotate off the committee having served many interns faithfully. so, special thanks to them. The new committee will include Curtis, Linda, Mark, Marcia, and two new members: Jan Huntley and Mike Wormald. I give thanks to God for their service, all year, not just in ordinary time.

Pastor Scott

FROM THE VICAR...



To my dear friends at St. Paul's, Greetings and salutations! My name is Gina Schaefer and I will be your new vicar come August. Some of you may have met me during my visits to the

congregation this summer but I am certainly excited to meet those of you I may have missed. It's been wonderful to get to know the congregation that I will be working alongside in the coming year.

To start, I'd like to introduce myself.

You should be pleased to know that I am, technically, a local. To the point that I've remarked a few times that moving to Durham is a bit like coming home. My parents grew up in the Raleigh-Durham area and so I spent much of my childhood visiting my grandparents in this exact part of the state. To prove my credentials: my grandmother had a house on Cornwallis Road and my grandfather was a professor at Duke. My family lived in Efland when I was very young but we relocated to Hickory when I was about six.

My faith journey began at an ELCA church in Claremont where I failed to pay attention in worship and made solid, but futile, efforts to skip Sunday school. I struggled with my faith for several years, eventually refusing to go to church altogether as a teenager. Because of this, I was never confirmed. However, God has a sense of humor and wasn't done with me yet. I received a call to ministry when I was seventeen. An experience I like to call the "divine two-by-four." So, back to church I went.

After I graduated high school in 2017, I attended Lenoir-Rhyne University for my undergraduate degree. Because of all my wayward years from the church my religious knowledge was severely lacking. In addition, it was very important to me to come to a faith of my own understanding. I didn't want people to just tell me what the bible said. I wanted to find out for myself.

Because of this I intentionally decided to major in Religious Studies alongside Psychology. In 2020, I graduated from LR with my bachelors and went straight to Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary for my Masters in Divinity. Where LR laid a ground work of theology, LTSS prepared me for ministry. From teaching me how to preach and provide pastoral care; to helping me take my theology and actually make it matter. I graduated from LTSS in May.

I'll let the cat out of the bag: I'm only twenty-three (twenty-four in August). St. Paul's will be my first chance to work full time in ministry. I'm excited as I am nervous. However, I also feel that I have been well equipped in my education and training to make this jump. It's going to be a learning process and I'm thrilled to have a chance to learn alongside you all. I've heard only great things about this community.

A few more facts about me: I have, off and on, worked as a professional digital artist (although I have respectfully retired from commission work recently). I still enjoy drawing for my own purposes though. I am a big time cat person and I will begin my transition to official "crazy cat lady" by getting a cat as soon as I move to Durham. I love to crochet, go on long walks, play video games, learn about history (my recent interest has been 19th century Oceanliners, fun stuff!), and to cook. I'm also an avid practitioner of martial arts.

With all that said, I look forward to joining you in August!

Vicar Gina Schaefer

Adopt-a-Duke Lutheran: The Joys of God's Family

by Marilyn Bell Hawley

Our congregation has been changed forever, thanks to Duke Lutherans and the "Adopt-a-Duke Lutheran" Program. We began participating in the program early in its inception in 2018.

The effort to match students desiring "family ties" while they were away from home, with members, felt like an extension of St. Paul's mission to share God in Christ with the world and one another through service, support, and learning.

Remembering my own time as a college student away from home, I was very blessed to have been positively embraced by our Interdenominational College Ministry, as it was called then. During that program, I interacted with students and advisors from



all over the world and was drawn to wanting to share that experience with Duke students who also had that desire.

That experience

enlightened me and provided my earliest experiences with different races and cultural practices. Such interactions and genuinely sharing our similarities and

differences affirmed my belief that **all of us** are far more alike than different ... which is so reassuring on my Christian journey!

Our Duke Lutheran daughter, **Jovita Byemerwa from Tanzania**, continues to affirm that belief as we have accepted her into our family and she has added so much humility and joy to our lives.



Upon our initial meeting, we felt a connection and immediately began spending time together by inviting her to events at church and to our home. She has met our friends, spent Thanksgiving with us, and met our entire family including our grandchildren, Olivia and Aidan. She always knew we would have her favorite meal when she visited.



We shared her times of isolation during the pandemic and made an extra effort to reach out to her with encouragement and support. We shared her concerns for her own family back home and

mourned the loss of her family members along with her.



I loved hearing her stories after she returned to Durham

after occasional visits home to Tanzania. I wanted to

know about her time with her grandparents, as well as all the details of her brother's wedding, and her new nephews. I imagined what her mother was like when she would tell me about growing up as the only daughter. I reflected on my own daughter's time away from home and the blessing of the 'adopted' families and friends who nurtured and accepted her.

Like all college students, Jovita was not without the challenges of student life. She often shared those challenges with me, not only regarding her experiences, at Duke, but as an African woman in America and the realities of our culture.

When Jovita graduated this past spring, I was as proud of her and her journey as I was years ago at my own daughter's graduation! That same feeling of sheer gratitude for her hard work and her efforts to reach her goals was overwhelming for me all over again!

The additional highlight of our role as her adopted family was the very honor we felt by hosting her family in our home during part of their time here during her graduation! Upon welcoming them to our home and all the introductions, it was as if we had always known each other. Her siblings were clearly her protective big brothers. And her mother and I had so much to share and reminisce about "our" daughter. Her father was quietly overwhelmed with pride, as they all were, with a delightful sense of humor and a lot of questions about the structure of the Lutheran church here in America and the N.C. Synod. Jovita's family was truly the family we always had, but were just meeting for the first time.

Jovita's demonstrated and consistent faith throughout her time as a student has been an inspiration to me. Her tenacity and determination has strengthened my own. And I know I am a better person because she is in my life, thanks to the Adopt-a-Duke Lutheran program.

Note from Pastor Amanda Highben:

The Adopt-a-Duke Lutheran program was created in 2018 to care for and support students during their time away from home and family. Members who would like to serve as Adopt-a-Duke Lutheran "parents" are matched with students (undergraduate and graduate) and encouraged to share Jesus' love with them in a variety of ways: through prayer and conversation, sending cards or care packages (students love snail mail!), inviting them to (or out to) dinner or coffee, and simply "nurturing and accepting" them as Marilyn writes. We believe you will also find, as Marilyn and her family did with Jovita, that you will be blessed, and your own faith deepened, when you become "family" for one of our students. If you would

like to learn more or consider being an Adopt-a-Duke Lutheran parent, please contact Duke Lutherans pastor Amanda Highben (amanda.highben@duke.edu, 612-418-4192.)

Preschool Pitter-Patter

by Amanda Stoen

The preschool is ecstatic to share that we received a \$10,000 grant from the Peeler/Casey fund through the NC Synod. With these funds, the preschool will be expanding our classroom space in the woods. Since the preschool re-opened in the Fall of 2020, we have spent much of our school day outside. As we are shifting to learning to live with Covid-19, our teachers and children still enjoy much of our day outside. As you may have noticed, we have created an outdoor classroom in the back parking lot and now with this grant, we will be able to shift that space into the woods.



Why the woods, you may ask. We have used the woods as an opportunity to immerse our preschoolers in the wonder of God's world. It is our responsibility as the caretakers of our children's little hearts

and spirits, to give them plenty of time and opportunity to immerse themselves in the power and exhilaration of nature and to fall in love

with the natural world.

Humans have an innate need to seek connections

with nature and other forms of life. Research shows us that time spent in nature is crucial to healthy human development. Playing in and with nature provides children with the many physical, cognitive and social and emotional benefits needed to grow into healthy adults.

We recently completed our third school year of successful outdoor learning and we have seen the continued benefits of outdoor education for our children. Our major goal is to facilitate physical activity and academic learning among young children in a safe and engaging outdoor environment. The preschool continues to support children who are neurodivergent. The Cleveland Clinic defines neurodivergent as, "People whose brain differences affect how their brain works – they have different strengths and challenges from people whose brains don't have those differences." Being outside removes neurodivergent children from some of their typical life stressors. The Health & Place report notes that children on the autism spectrum laughed and smiled more when they were in nature, finding opportunities to become happy and relaxed.

In August, the preschool will meet with the Church Council to share our plans and timeline for our outdoor classroom project in the woods. We will continue to share our progress with the congregation throughout the project. We are excited to expand our outdoor space as a preschool and offer a unique classroom to our local preschool community. Please keep the preschool and our expansion into the woods in your prayers.

The Rev. James Dahl



Our congratulations to James Dahl, who was ordained at St. Paul's on Saturday, June 15, 2023 with a luncheon reception afterwards. James was called as Pastor to St. Luke Lutheran Church in Taylorsville, NC which he began on July 1, 2023. Many thanks to all who helped in the planning and participation in his

service and fellowship luncheon! Photo is of Sue and Gary Dahl with their son, the Rev. James Dahl.

From the Finance Committee

We are now at the mid-point of St. Paul's fiscal year and the Finance Committee would like to share an update of the church's finances. In terms of giving, we have received \$307,481 in pledged contributions and \$2,935 in loose offering during the services through June. We have also received another \$8,308 in other contributions to the operating budget, including \$2,049 in meal donations. Total giving to the operating expenses is thus \$318,724. We are slightly ahead of pledged giving for the year as a few families/individuals have already given their entire year's pledge.



Operating expenses are the expenses to running and maintaining the church, such as salaries, building maintenance, office operations, utilities, janitorial services, altar supplies, and educational materials. Operating expenses don't include vicar expenses, Duke Lutheran Campus ministry, or designated giving, such as World Hunger, Disaster Relief, and Lutheran Family services.

The operating expenses are just slightly above budget at \$316,935. Subtracting the expenses from the total giving to the operating expenses gives a net of \$1,789. However, we started the year with a deficit of \$7,615 from 2022 so the actual operating balance is -\$5,826. Because it is prudent to maintain a positive operating balance, we moved \$30,000 from our Capital Reserves to the operating budget. This is not surprising as going into 2023 there was a \$70,000 gap between projected income and expenses.

This brings up 2 points the Finance committee would like to make. One, we encourage everyone to fulfill their 2023 pledge and two, to prayerfully consider increasing their 2024 pledge. With inflation, our expenses are only going to go up and we only have so much money in Capital Reserves to drawn on.

On another financial note, one of our St. Paul's families donated \$100,000 to pay down the mortgage principal in the hopes that others would contribute as well.

Respectfully submitted,
John Foreman
Finance Committee Chair

Stephen Ministry

How often have we wished that there was someone we could talk to confidentially that would just listen to our troubles and not tell us how to fix them. Also, this person would show up faithfully and know how to listen attentively. There is such a person in our congregation, and he/she is called a Stephen minister. Stephen Ministers are trained lay people who offer one on one care to individuals experiencing life difficulties, such as grief, illness, depression, aging, and job loss to name a few.



Problems around aging and grief are the most common reasons someone asks for a Stephen Minister. For example, several of our Stephen Ministers are helping individuals with serious health issues and depression. Another is helping someone deal with loneliness after making a long-distance move. Another Stephen Minister is helping someone deal with grief after the recent loss of his wife. Another of our Stephen ministers is helping a spouse deal with loss as his wife sinks deeper into dementia. If you are someone experiencing a life difficulty and would like a Stephen Minister, contact John Foreman, Kim Hoke, or Nan Treul.

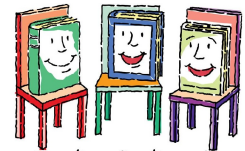
Do you have a caring heart and willingness to help hurting people? Would you like to become a Stephen minister but concerned you don't have the skills? Not to worry. The Stephen Ministry program has training programs in our area to give you those skills. All that is necessary is a desire to help hurting people. These are just two of the comments our Stephen ministers made on the annual survey:

- ◆ Stephen Ministry has helped me act out God's love and caring with a fellow human soul. I feel joy in the relationship and human connections that we have achieved, at times lost, and re-found.
- ◆ The gift of presence is priceless and rare. The skills I've learned through initial SM training, and what I've learned from my SM peers, have had a tremendous, positive impact on my communications in many areas of my life. I'm becoming a more patient listener and am more mindful to truly listen rather than forming my next response. I think SM training should be a part of all pre-marital counseling!

If you are interested in becoming a Stephen minister, contact John Foreman, Kim Hoke, or Nan Treul.

St. Paul's Readers

Although our book club meetings are on summer break, it is a wonderful time to start reading our fall selections. We hope to expand our circle of readers over the coming months and hope that you will consider joining us for one or all of our meetings.



St. Paul's Readers

Our September book is *Don Quixote* by Miguel de Cervantes, translated by Edith Grossman. This epic Spanish novel plot revolves around the adventures of an hidalgo of the lowest nobility. He either loses or pretends to have lost his mind in order to become a romantic knight to revive chivalry and serve his nation. The simple farmer recruited to serve as his squire often employs an earthy wit and droll realism to deal with Don Quixote's imagination and idealism – resulting in a knightly tale for the annals of time.

In October, we will discuss *Judas* by Amos Oz, a philosophical novel that focuses on the question of treason. This powerful book is both an exquisite love story and coming-of-age novel, as well as an allegory for the state of Israel and for the biblical tale from which it draws its title.

In November, our novel is *Horse* by Geraldine Brooks. The sweeping and suspenseful historical fiction is based upon the true story of one of America's greatest racehorses and his enslaved groom. This powerful book jumps between time periods, disciplines, and unforgettable characters to explore themes of love, art, race, and redemption.

We ask you to submit books for our reading list next year as we hope to finalize the list by late October. Please let us know of books that have resonated with you so that our selections can reflect a wide variety of interests and genres.

I hope that you will think about participating in our monthly meetings (3rd Thursdays at 3 pm). We invite all readers to join us. Please contact Katherine Trexler (katherine.m.trexler@gmail.com) with any questions. Happy Reading!

Would Appreciate a Visit

Mary Bader, a member at St. Paul's, would appreciate having visitors come see her as she cannot get out. Her contact information is:

Carter Living Center, Room 306
303 East Carver Street
Durham, NC 27704
Cell Phone: 330-264-9464
email: boomerbader61@icloud.com

Our Free Little Library

Stop by the shelf near the water fountain upstairs and check out the books, puzzles, and magazines for your use. You are welcome to take or leave one or more for your use or to share with others.

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 Gina Schaefer (after August 16) - vicar@stpaulsdurham.org

News from Growing thru Grief

Those who experience the loss of a loved one have a very hard path to follow. That is why Growing thru Grief offers help. Here is our schedule for August:



- Aug 1 Anger in Grief, with Bill Dahl
- Aug 8 Trust the Process, with Jan Huntley
- Aug 15 A Recipe for Grief, with Cheryl Koepke
- Aug 22 Sitting at the Intersection of Grief and Mindfulness, with Mandy Murphy
- Aug 29 Everything New Is Old Again, with Lynn Heath

We meet at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 1200 W. Cornwallis Rd, on Tuesdays from 4 to 6 pm. First timers will need to show proof of Covid vaccination and booster(s). All are welcome.

Growing thru Grief is a coalition of area religious

and civic organizations who offer support and education to those grieving the loss of a loved one. We have been meeting most weeks since 2013.

Our sympathy to the following families:



- † Sean Slane upon the death of his father
- † Kathryn and Scott Anderson and family, upon the death of Kathy's mother, Sally Midyette, who lived in Oriental, NC. She died on July 24, 2023.
- † Vera O'Day, close friend of Deb Tabert

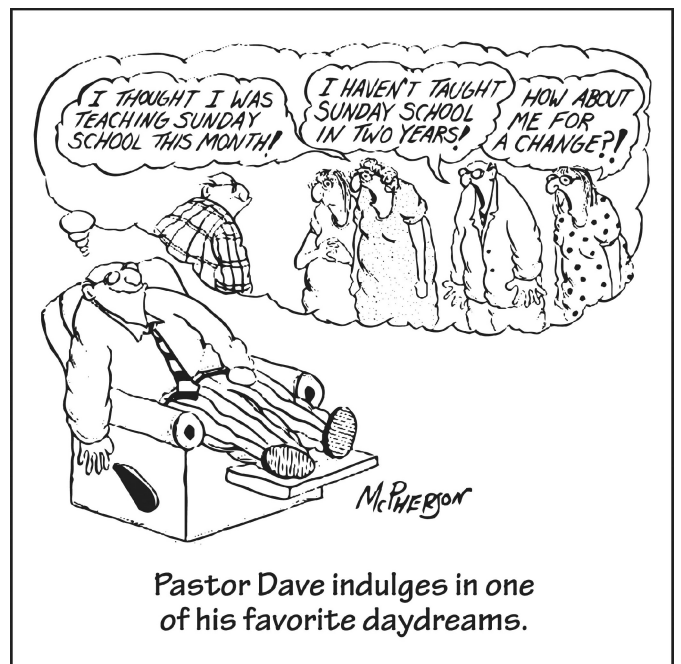
The Tongue and Thimble group creates small quilts which are distributed to the nurseries at local hospitals for their critical patients.



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. If you have an interest in sewing, please stop by and see what we are working on.

The Dropped Stitch Group will not be meeting until September 29th, the last Friday of the month at 1:00 pm.



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

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Service of Remembrance



- ▶ Saturday, August 12, 2023 at 10:00 am
- ▶ Goodson Chapel, Duke Divinity School (next to Duke Chapel)
- ▶ Parking: Brian Center Parking Garage off Science Drive on Duke campus
- ▶ Registration is required.

Duke Hospice Bereavement Services is offering this annual observance as a time of commemoration and reflection, open to all members of our community who are grieving. While not religious in nature, the service is deeply spiritual and includes music, poetry and a time for individual remembrance of your loved one. Participants are invited to bring a photo of their loved one to the service. We offer this ceremony to allow those who are grieving to come together and honor the lives of those whom we mourn and have meant so much to us.

Pound the New Vicar!

Vicar Gina Schaefer will begin on August 16. To "pound" her, we invite you to bring items such as basic household supplies, such as dish soap, Clorox wipes, cleaning supplies, Ziplock bags, food wraps (plastic, foil), cleaning sponges. Another great idea is to purchase gift cards to area stores (Target, Walmart, Harris Teeter, Wegmans, etc.). Cards can be dropped in the offering plate or the finance room drop box. Items can be left in the grey bin in the Atrium. Please have items at the church by August 20.



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. All Sunday School classes are on break and will resume in September.

Child Care on Sunday mornings!

We have an attendant, Courtney Rosenstein, on Sunday mornings who will care for your small children so parents and older children may attend worship. She will be available during the 8:30 am service and the 11:00 am service. Care will take place in the Parlor which is the room (and restroom) located between the atrium and Whitesell Fellowship Hall.



Altar Flowers

If you would like to make a recognition through a request for Altar Flowers, please stop by the credenza under the TV monitor in the atrium. Sign up for the day(s) you would like to request, pick up an envelope and form in the lower box and turn in your request form(s) which should indicate your announcement for the bulletin, and payment (\$40) at least one week in advance. If you have any questions, speak with a staff person.

