

St. Paul Lutheran Church

Chimes

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March 2020

From the Pastor

Dear People of God,

It's hard to believe that the season of Lent is here. Why, we've hardly had any chance to experience the purging penance of a difficult winter. Now the disciplines of a spiritual nature are upon us. I'd like to explore with you during our mid-week services the discipline of decluttering our lives of both the material things that crowd them out as well as the toxic relationships that can rob us of our joy and freedom. And I want to discuss these issues within a liturgical format that may be very unfamil-

iar to you but has its origins back in the earliest days of the church— that of the dinner church.

Dinner church is the modern equivalent of the original, first-century house church where Christians would gather in their homes to celebrate the agape (love) feast together with Holy Communion. St. Paul discusses these practices in I Corinthians 11. Several years ago dinner church began at a Lutheran congregation in Brooklyn, New York where young singles would return home from their work in Manhattan

on Friday evenings and come together at church to prepare a common meal while simultaneously worshipping. The total experience brings together elements of fellowship and physical and spiritual sustenance in a way that Jesus often accentuated in His own life and ministry.

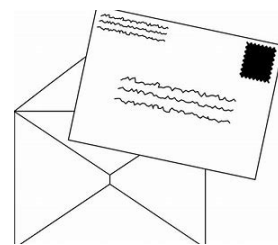
Beginning on Wednesday, March 4, at 6:00 pm in Spies Hall (and continuing for the next four Wednesdays), we'll gather around a central table with lighted votive candles. Returning with our candles to surrounding tables, we'll begin with an opening liturgy, then the passing of a loaf of bread with the words "This is my body." Following a Scripture passage and a brief homily on the evening's theme, we'll enjoy

the main course of home-made soup as we discuss questions related to decluttering our lives. At the end of the meal, wine will be served with the words "This is my blood," thus concluding the sacramental element of the service. Candles will be returned to the central table, an offering will be received, and participants will be invited to help clean up as dessert is served.

I encourage you to come out and experience this unique and meaningful way of observing Lent that is as old as the church itself and as new as our need to enhance our relationships with God and others. And bring a friend(s).

Your friend in Christ,

Carl W. Filer



A Letter from the Parish Administrator

I want to express my thanks to all of you who have welcomed me to this position. I am looking forward to serving God and this congregation. Thank you also for your patience and understanding as I learn this new role and all that it involves. Terry has left some big shoes to fill! He guided me in doing all the things that he formerly did, so any lapse is my fault not his. Thank you for any gentle reminders I may receive as I develop my schedule and system of doing things.

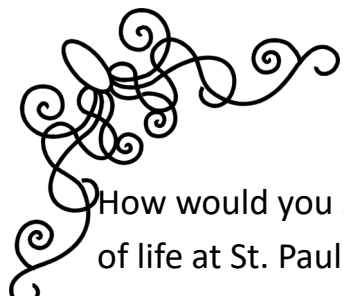
I greatly appreciate all the feedback that I have been receiving about my performance, and the changes I have been im-

plementing as I combine the secretary function with the coordinator functions into this new role. Understand that these changes are not a comment on anything previously done, but are my own understanding of the new duties, my previous experiences and my own personal way of performing these tasks.

Please pray for me as I endeavor to serve God and this congregation in a manner that is pleasing to Him. I pray for a short learning curve and to serve to my best efforts.

Blessings!

Leanna Wickline, your Parish Administrator



How would you summarize the last ten years of life at St. Paul Lutheran Church? This is the question that was posed to the Congregational Council as we completed a new *Ministry Site Profile* for our pastoral vacancy on Thursday, February 20.

After an abbreviated meeting to address the required business of the congregation (previous minutes, financial report, building use requests, and committee reports), Council discussed and composed a Ministry Site Profile report which will be made available to all pastoral candidates who may be considering St. Paul, Tannersville as a possible call. The narrative portion of the report took approximately five hours to compose, but Council's work was limited to a ninety-minute review and revision of the narrative answers discussing the characteristics, context, trends, programs, purpose, giftedness, and mission at St. Paul. Council also completed two brief survey sections asking us to designate the most important characteristics desired of a new pastor.

You, the congregation, will also have an important role in guiding the selection of a new pastor. Pastor Niels Nielsen, the Dean of the Pocono Mission District, will be joining us on a Sunday afternoon in March (probably at about 1:30 pm) for the *Congregational Vitality Survey* and the *Reflection Questions for Congregations in Transition*. Although we had originally hoped to complete this work as

part of our regular Sunday worship, Pastor Nielsen is not available until early afternoon because he is also the pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Bushkill. When Pastor Nielsen is available, we will complete the two surveys individually, and you'll have the opportunity to ask questions about the transition to a new pastor.

So, what information about St. Paul and Pocono Township did the Council include in the Ministry Site Profile? Here's a quick summary of the highlights:

Characteristics: demographics of Pocono Township, employment opportunities, the Poconos' reputation for four-season recreation, and our enjoyment of the outdoors.

Context: traffic congestion and perpetual reconstruction of roads, sewer and water lines; the emergence of greater health care choice in the area, the continuing challenge of high taxes especially for senior citizens.

Trends: the decline in members over the past several years, the increase in facilities use by many community groups, the elimination of the church mortgage.

Programs: active benevolence groups including a food bank, a sewing group for children's clothes, the "Just Because" program, Christ's Café, "My Brother's Keeper" program for the homeless, traditional and contemporary worship.

Purpose: our new mission statement, our founding in 1834, the strength of our benevolence program over the history of the congregation, our outreach to the local community.

Giftedness: the dedication and commitment of the membership to do more with less, the fact that our committees are “spread thin,” the high number of older members in the congregation, the accompanying need for new families and younger members.

Mission: our efforts to welcome new members, feeding the hungry in our community, the generous use of our facilities by a variety of community groups including three recovery groups.

Finally, here is our *Summary Description*, the short summary of our congregation that will give interested candidates a “snapshot” of St. Paul, Tannersville:

St. Paul Lutheran Church is a once-vibrant congregation that is learning to think of itself as a small to medium-sized church after twenty-five years of significant growth and activity (1985—2010). The congregation is committed to its mission of sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ in the community of Tannersville, Pennsylvania. One of the oldest Lutheran churches in Monroe County, St. Paul

seeks a part-time pastor (with various possible configurations) to grow its congregation and attract a core of more culturally diverse members who represent the changing demographics of the area.

By the time you read this month’s column, our Ministry Site Profile will have been posted on the ELCA site designed to facilitate pastoral relocation across the Lutheran churches in America. Let us hope and pray that it will attract someone who will prayerfully consider becoming the next permanent pastor of St. Paul, Tannersville.

Until then, you can assist in the call process by doing two things: 1) praying for the future of St. Paul as we seek new pastoral leadership, and 2) attending the survey session with Pastor Nielsen on a Sunday afternoon in March.

As always, please contact any Council member or Pastor Filer with any questions you may have.

Bill Below,
Council President



The Sewing Ladies

We will be meeting and stitching on the 3rd, 17th and 31st, beginning at 10:00am. Anyone interested in sewing, knitting or crocheting with us is welcome to join and will be greeted warmly.

Lenten Services

Lenten Dinner Church

March 4	6:00pm	Dinner Church-Manna from Heaven
March 11	6:00pm	Dinner Church-Mary & Martha: The one thing needful
March 18	6:00pm	Dinner Church-Treasures on earth
March 25	6:00pm	Dinner Church-Do not worry about tomorrow
April 1	6:00pm	Dinner Church-A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions

Holy Week

April 5	9:00am	Palm Sunday/Passion Sunday
April 9	7:00pm	Maunday Thursday Service
April 10	7:00pm	Good Friday Tenebrae Service
April 12	9:00am	Easter Sunday

What is Dinner Church?

Going back to the time of Christ, when He would go into people's home, sharing a meal and His message, Dinner Church began. A resurgence began in 2008 in Brooklyn, NY when several Lutheran Churches began the practice, the pastors describing it as a prompting by the Holy Spirit to begin worshipping in this manner. It is an experiential service, including Holy Communion, a short homily and discussion questions. This can make the time of Lent a time of introspection, penitence and a reminder of our human mortality, while opening us to the idea of community and "uncluttering" those things in our lives that bog us down as Christians and humans.

Stop the Bleed, the companion emergency training to the CPR training that occurred at St. Paul's in January, will be held on Sunday, March 8th during Sunday School time (approximately 10:15am). All who participated in the CPR training are highly encouraged to attend. If you did not attend

the CPR training, please don't let that keep you from participating in this important training. If you love someone on blood thinners, this training could allow you to save your loved one's life. If you don't know someone on blood thinners, with this training, you may save a stranger's life.

The Call Process

Our Council has submitted the information to Synod to begin the search in the call process. The congregation holds a role in this process too.

In addition to praying for your leadership, both in this church and in the Synod, the *Congregational Vitality Survey* and the *Reflection Questions for Congregations in Transition* is your opportunity to state your views on what is important to this congregation and what we are looking for in a pastor.

Pastor Niels Nielsen, the Dean of the Pocomo Mission District, will be joining us on a Sunday afternoon to be determined in March (probably at about 1:30 pm) to lead us in the completion of these forms and to provide answers to your questions about the process.

Your attendance and participation will provide information to help to guide our leadership in securing a pastor to lead our congregation into the future.



Souper Bowl of Caring

Our donation was 483 items to the Strunk Food Pantry. Thank You!!! The Strunk Food Pantry served an average of approximately 180 people per month last year.



New Office Hours

Monday—Wednesday 9:00am to 1:00pm

Thursday 9:00am to 5:00pm

New Office Email

parishadmin@stpaultannersvillepa.org

Food Pantry Hours

Every Tuesday 11:00am to 1:00pm

Just Because

For the month of March we will be collecting glue Sticks for **Just Because**, our outreach program serving Swiftwater Elementary School. During February we donated 36 assorted types of wet wipes!! Thank you for your generosity to this important program.

Grocery Register Tapes

Please bring Weis and ShopRite register tapes to church each week. They can be placed in the box on the table in the narthex. However, we can only use Kinsley's ShopRite of Brod-headsville and they cannot be used after one year old. Weis tapes can be used after one year.



Don't forget to put St. Paul Lutheran Church Tannersville as your charity before checking out on Amazon. They will send us 1% of your purchase.



The Chancel Choir and Handbell Choir
are interested in expanding their
membership!

Do you like to sing or ring?

Rehearsals are Tuesday night. If interested,
contact Bob Jones.



Sunday Worship Scheule for March

March 1 Contemporary Service with Holy Communion 1st Sunday in Lent

Greeter - Fran Sammarco, Lector - Bill Below, Communion Assistants - Mattie Morales and Deb Storman, Ushers – Bruce Orłowski & Charlie Hemple

March 8 Traditional Service 2nd Sunday in Lent

Greeter - Dan Wickline, Lector - Dan Wickline, Ushers - Beth & Carl Reindl

March 15 Traditional Service with Holy Communion 3rd Sunday in Lent

Greeter - Beth Werkheiser, Lector - Dawn Weiss, Communion Assistants - Dawn Weiss & Leanna Wickline, Ushers - Bruce Orłowski & Charlie Hemple

March 22 Traditional Service 4th Sunday in Lent

Greeters - Ron & Ingrid Unternahrer, Lector - Jim Werkheiser, Ushers - Gladys Pena & Donnie Sparacino

March 29 Traditional Service with Holy Communion 5th Sunday in Lent

Greeters - Ed & Maryann Kenderdine, Lector - Leanna Wickline, Communion Assistant - Leanna Wickline & Linda Below, Ushers - Deb Storman & Dan Wickline

We Are Looking for a Few Volunteers

We have a few holes in our schedule for soup makers for Lenten Dinner Church. We also would appreciate donations of **desserts!**



Looking Ahead to April

- April 1** **Lenten Dinner Church**
- April 5** **Palm Sunday**
- April 9** **Maundy Thursday**
- April 10** **Good Friday**
- April 12** **Easter Sunday**
- April 15** **Christ's Cafe**
- April 19** **Monroe County Fireman's Association**
Fireman's Memorial Service 1:00pm
- April 28** **Primary Elections**

MARCH 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:00 Contemporary Svc Holy Communion 10:15 Sunday School/ Confirmation Class	2	3 10:00am Sewing 6:15pm Bells 6:30pm Christian Ed 7:00pm Chancel Choir 7:00pm AA & 12 Step	4 6:00pm Lenten Dinner Church	5 Home School 6:30pm Christ's Café meeting	6 6:30pm AA	7 <i>Home School Learning Fair</i>
8 9:00 Traditional Service 10:00 Coffee Hour 10:15 Sunday School/ Confirmation Class	9	10 4:00pm Worship & Music 6:15pm Bells 7:00pm Property 7:00pm Chancel Choir 7:00pm AA & 12 Step	11 6:00pm Lenten Dinner Church	12 Home School	13 6:30pm AA	14
15 9:00 Traditional Service Holy communion 10:15 Sunday School/ Confirmation Class	16	17 10:00am Sewing 6:15pm Bells 7:00pm Chancel Choir 7:00pm AA & 12 Step	18 4:40pm Christ's Café 6:00pm Lenten Dinner Church	19 Home School Noon Senior Luncheon 7:00pm Council	20 6:30pm AA	21 <i>Home School Family Dance</i>
22 9:00 Traditional Service 10:00 Coffee Hour 10:15 Sunday School/ Confirmation Class	23	24 6:15pm Bells 7:00pm Chancel Choir 7:00pm AA & 12 Step	25 6:00pm Lenten Dinner Church	26 Home School	27 6:30pm AA	28 <i>10:00am AA Share Day</i>
29 9:00 Traditional Service Holy Communion 10:15 Sunday School/ Confirmation Class	30	31 10:00am Sewing 6:15pm Bells 7:00pm Chancel Choir 7:00pm AA & 12 Step				