

St. Paul Lutheran Church

Chimes

January 2022



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Tannersville, Pennsylvania

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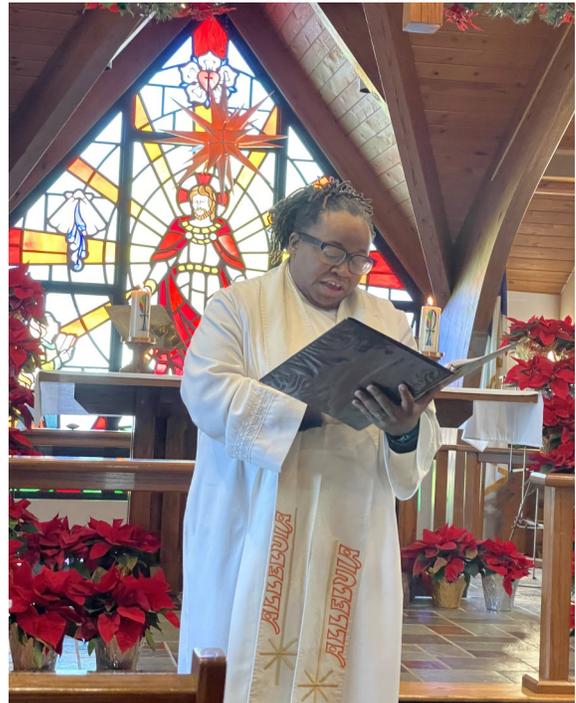
Website: www.stpaultannersvillepa.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/stpaultannersvillepa

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCswR6FI09zcaiDPY174k5A>

Introducing Our New Pastor Pastor "Woody" Santiago

Pastor "Woody" Santiago officially began her position here at St Paul on December 8, 2021. Her cell number is 484-338-4340 and she may soon be calling to schedule a visit to your home.



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

“So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!” – 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NRSV)

It is amazing that God has called me to serve you. I am excited to see what God’s blessings are going to be for St. Paul. This past year has been difficult for so many people around the world. People are facing some many uncertainties. Now we are approaching a new year, a new beginning. The scripture I picked reminds me of Christ being ever so present in the abundance of life. Christ gives a new beginning to start over in grace. He is able to wipe away our tears, fears and anxieties so we many be a new creation.

As we are coming into a new year, I am excited to see newness of Christ at St. Paul. How the newness will bring us more together and have ministry reach so many people. I hope you and your family had a great Christmas. I am elated to be your pastor. May God bless you and St. Paul as we journey together with Christ.

Blessings,
Pastor Woody



Council Corner

As I prepare to write each month's *Council Corner* column for publication in our *Chimes* newsletter, I have developed the habit of looking back at the previous year's column before I write. It's only a period of twelve months, but it's amazing how much information I either forget or suppress in that short time span. To illustrate, my column for January 2021 spoke of the closing of the sanctuary (again) because of the COVID pandemic, but it also pointed to the optimistic news that the United States would have at least two or three vaccines for the virus available to all by February or March. Although those vaccines arrived and were welcomed by many, we did not fully anticipate the vaccine resistance that would develop nationwide nor the Delta and Omicron variants that would continue to drive the pandemic and overcrowd our hospitals. But here we are, still debating the value of masking indoors and taking "booster" doses of vaccines. However, on the positive side, we are blessed to be able to continue worshipping in our sanctuary, and wearing a mask is certainly a small sacrifice to assure that we are protecting others around us as well as ourselves.

On an even more positive note, for the first time since January 2017 we have a permanent pastor in place to lead our congregation. As you all know by now, Pastor Rashion Santiago accepted a Call to St. Paul on No-

vember 7, 2021 and began her ministry here officially on December 8. It was especially reassuring during the Advent and Christmas/Epiphany season to know that our pastor will be with us throughout the week for our activities and meetings, not just on Sunday morning for an hour or two. As we begin our ministry together, it's a good time for us to reflect on the five mutual goals we, the people of St. Paul, established in our *Ministry Site Profile* in January 2019:

1. Establishing mutual ministry with all the people of St. Paul
2. Increasing the participation of young people in the congregation and Sunday School
3. Increasing fellowship opportunities and participation by members of all ages
4. Increasing Sunday worship attendance
5. Establishing a sense of stewardship beyond the congregation and the local community

As a congregation and Council, we have pledged to provide support to the ministry of Pastor Santiago in the following ways:

1. Through active discipleship/membership at St. Paul
2. Through active participation in the groups, projects, and committees of St. Paul
3. Through the active encouragement and welcoming of others to join us in our

ministry

4. Through the generous and committed financial support of St. Paul's program.
5. Through the development of new programs initiated by Pastor Santiago and the Council

From conversations I have had with church leaders in other congregations over the past few years, I have learned that there is sometimes a kind of complacency that can develop after a new pastor arrives. After the Call Committee has done their work, and the congregation has elected and welcomed the new pastor, it is sometimes only natural for a congregation to take a deep breath of relief and sit back to see what the new pastor will do. That behavior is exactly what we need to avoid. The previous ten points from our *Ministry Site Profile* provide a working plan for our transition to a new pastor and a new ministry. On our committees and Council, we have already had discussions with Pastor Santiago on how and why we do things a certain way and have defined procedures here at St. Paul. Our discussions have been mutually beneficial, and we have already identified some projects for 2022. For example, we will need to revise our St. Paul Constitution (last revised in 2010) to bring it in compliance with the ELCA's model constitution of 2019.

As we begin a new ministry together, it's important to know that we don't have to do everything at once. The programs we have in place are largely sound, and our committees are generally responsive to the

needs of our church. Still, there is always room for fine tuning and improvement, and a fresh perspective from a new pastor is invaluable in the church's process of self-evaluation. Best of all, we can be assured that with Pastor "Woody," we'll work on our mutual ministry with good humor and creativity.

Finally, here's an update from recent activity from the Council:

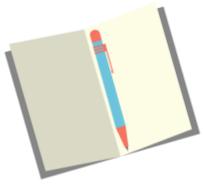
- Replacement of the 30-year-old flooring in the music hallway as well as the narthex/overflow area
- Action to replace Prosser Labs for monthly water testing (until fully resolved)
- Discussion to expand guidelines for weddings and special events at St. Paul
- Renewal of snowplowing agreement with Ryan Johnson Landscaping
- Contracted removal of six dead trees near the sanctuary
- Discussion to secure the Spies Hall kitchen and rest room area from further plumbing damage (recent insurance claim, 12/21)

Best Wishes to All for a Blessed Holiday Season and a Healthy and Happy New Year!

Bill Below

Council President





A Letter from the Parish Administrator

For many reasons, this has been a Christmas like no other, but they kind of all are different aren't they?

This year, waiting for my treatment to begin, waiting for my husband to return to health, has been full of Advent-like waiting. It has not been a commercial Christmas this year. I didn't bake Christmas cookies. I sent fewer cards. Bought fewer gifts. Spent more time with my loved ones, and less time with my husband who was hospitalized, and more time alone in prayer. The flurry of activity as we neared Christmas Eve was very church oriented... not necessarily how you would think, given my position here.

It wasn't all a flurry of preparations for the worship service... we had an "event" occur here December 21st. As I was beginning my work day by showing the new water testing person where to test, I had the unpleasant discovery of "dirty" water flooding the Spies Hall kitchen and men's room. A flurry of phone calls and mops & buckets (more asking for help practice) and soon, it was somewhat under control. The process of insurance claims, mitigation and restoration soon was underway.

It is amazing the amount of damage that occurs when dirty water soaks into cabinets, drywall, carpet, etc. Add to that what was in the water, and YUCK! A lot needs to be removed. Even the air needed to be "scrubbed" and sanitized. It kind of smelled like a stable. Much what Mary would have experienced as she gave birth!

Certainly things are not like they "used to be" or "should be" this Christmas. Families are supposed be joining in great number both in homes, at parties and in Church. But that cant happen this year, year number to of Christmas with COVID. And many other confounding reasons as well. But Christmas still came! The celebrations may not look the same, but they are all celebrations of the greatest gift of all EVER! The gift of God's only begotten son, our Lord Jesus Christ. May we all feel the birth of Christ in our hearts anew.

Shortly after Christmas, I brought Dan home from the hospital and then began my much anticipated chemotherapy treatments... So far so good, but it is less than 24 hours, trying not to anticipate the worse, but not to count on no issues, trusting God to see me through but recognizing I have to do some of the "heavy lifting" myself. Listen to the doctors, (mine and my husbands), eat, drink, rest, be optimistic and the hardest of all ask for help when I need it. That is my work in process, but I am improving.

Thank you to all of you for the prayers, cards, well wishes and offers of help. You are all truly a blessing in my life. I pray that god allows me to be blessed to be a blessing the life of others.

Blessings,
Leanna Wickline, Your Parish Administrator





In Our Prayers

Prayers have been requested for the following brothers and sisters in Christ who have concerns needing God's help...

Sharen Ace; Msgt. William F. Allen; Private William "Blake" Allen; Tom Altemose; Mark Anthony; Evelyn Arroyo; Daniel Bartron; Wynne Below; Diane Berner; Dillon Berenti; Cptn. Matthew Blessing; David Brong; Linda Carrasquillo & family at the passing of her mother Carman Olan; Judi Carman; the family of Rich Catalano at his passing; Elaine Cornelus; Todd Geil; LilliAnna Daniels; Renee Depuy; Doris Drury; John Drury; Paul Fancher; Jamie Fisher & family at the loss of her son; Louis Genset; Lynn Gerber; the family of Chris Haley at his passing; Barry Harts-horn; Charlie Hemple; T. J. Imhof; Tiffany Johnson; Carol Jones; Ian Juica; Ed Kenderdine and family, at the passing of Mary Ann; Richard Kernan; Robbie Kinsley; Margaret Kinsley & family at the passing of her broth-

er; Nikolaos Kotretsos; Eleanor Kreuger; Dawne Ladeas; Joeann Lance; Esther Laurito; David Leith; James Meckes; Tom Miller; Steven Moore; Sue Neumann; Steve Oberman; Dr. Kenny Pearson; Annabelle Peechatka; Shirley Pensyl; Sandy Richards; Anna Rivera; Jean Ross; Gloria Russell; Jack Russell; Claudette Segear; Vaughn Sensinger; Phyllis Sensinger; Shirley Singer; Samuel Smith, Jr.; Kamia Taylor; Greg Theadford; Jim Tomedi; Alice Weaver; Harry Weaver; Dan Wickline; Leanna Wickline; Kelly Wickline; Jacob Wilson; John Woodling; Charles Zuccarelli; Fran Zuccarelli; for all who are traveling; for all of those struggling with addictions; the members of the Armed Forces of the United States; for the victims of the mass shootings, for all those around the world and here at home suffering from the coronavirus pandemic.

Serving Our Country

The following people are our friends and family who are serving our country at this time in the Armed Forces.

Sr. Master Sargent William F. Allen-Air Force (27 years of service)

Specialist William "Blake" Allen- Army

Captain Matthew Blessings- Air Force, stationed at Patuxent Naval Base, Patuxent River, MD, Test Pilot Training.

Captain Katy Blessing, (Matthew's wife) Air Force, Nellis Air Force Base, Las Vegas, NV.



Steve Oberman—National Guard, being deployed for up to 12 months. Wife and two small children here in Stroudsburg.

If you have a family member or friend who serves our country in the Armed Forces, please contact the office, so we can hold them in our prayers.

You've Got Mail!



Dear St. Paul Congregation:

I want to thank you for my send off. I appreciated the kind words of Bill at the end of my final service with you. I also appreciated the coffee hour which enabled me to say goodbye to many of you personally and to receive so many words of affirmation. My wife and I look forward to using the generous restaurant gift card as well.

I enjoyed my nearly 1 1/2 years with you, and I will miss you. I pray that you and your new pastor will have many years of fulfilling ministry together. Hopefully, I will see you all again sometime in future.

Blessings,
Pastor Bill

Dear St Paul Lutheran Church,

Thank you for hosting the Seniors Group for so many years. The Seniors have had many good times at your facility. As a group, COVID has affected our ability to meet together and at this time, there are only three people willing to attend. This is too few to allow us to monopolize your beautiful building. The St Paul Seniors are disbanding. Please accept this check as a thanks for the many years of fellowship.

St Paul Seniors Treasurer

Dear St Paul Adult Sunday School Class,

Warm and special thanks to you for all the considerate things you do. Thank you. Thank you so much for the gift certificate to Walmart. It is so appreciated. May God bless all of you for your kindness and generosity.

Mary Elizabeth & Joe Gill

Dear Council & Congregation of St. Paul,

Thank you so very much for the generous Christmas blessing. Even more so, thank you for your prayer support, emotional support, and offers of assistance in the office, transportation for my treatments, and at home for both Danny and I. Your love and support are so very much appreciated and mean so much to us both. I truly see Jesus' love in the people of this congregation.

Thank you!
Leanna Wickline

"Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for the generous gift certificate to Smuggler's Cove. As you have gathered from personal references in his sermons food is high on Dan's priority list; therefore, it is a perfect gift.

We both have enjoyed the Sundays that we worshipped together and appreciate the warmth and acceptance we felt. You will hold a special place in our hearts. As you begin a new journey with Pastor Santiago, we pray that the church will be a beacon of light to the community, growing and reaching out to those who so need a safe harbor.

Yours in Christ,
Jane & Dan Baugess



The Walter & Mary Alice Strunk Food Pantry

Thank you for your continued support of the food pantry! We continue to operate as a curbside pickup service. This allows for the safety of our helpers and the clients we serve. We have a faithful crew of volunteers, including Denise Bartleson, Charlie Hempel, Nancy Kehoe, Bruce Orlovski and Margaret Wyckoff. If you are inclined to donate food products, we can always use the typical pantry staples like cereal, canned fruits and soups. We collected supplies for 28 Thanksgiving Dinner “baskets”. The meals included a turkey or

turkey breast, stuffing, mashed potato & gravy, two vegetables, cranberry sauce, bread and dessert. Thank you to Kinsley’s ShopRite and other donors of turkeys. Thanks to all the donors who helped round out the meal package, and those who assembled and spent extra time to hand them out. Thank you to the students of God Is Love Christian School for decorating some of the bags used to hold the supplies.

Mini Ha-Ha’s



Two hats were hanging on a hat rack in the hallway. One hat said to the other, “You stay here; I’ll go on a head.”

My family told me to stop telling Thanksgiving jokes, but I told them I couldn’t quit “cold turkey.”

A man sent ten different puns to each of his friends via Facebook in hopes that one of them would make his friends laugh. Unfortunately no pun in ten did.

My dad was a Christmas tree salesman. Before he started work, he always got himself spruced up.

Some people love eggnog, while others find it’s not all it’s cracked up to be.



All I want for Christmas is ewe.





Worship Service Schedule

January 2nd	9:00am	Worship with Communion - 2nd Sunday of Christmas
January 9th	9:00am	Worship - Baptism of our Lord Sunday
January 16th	9:00am	Worship with Communion - 2nd Sunday after Epiphany
January 23rd	9:00am	Worship - 3rd Sunday after Epiphany
January 30th	9:00am	Worship - 4th Sunday after Epiphany

Meetings and Happenings

January 1st	New Year's Day
January 2nd	Forgiveness Challenge after worship service
January 8th	Wedding 2:00pm
January 4th & 18th	Sewing Group meets at 10:00 am
January 19th	Christ's Café from 4:30 to 6:00pm
January 20th	Council at 7:00 pm
Every Sunday	Adult Sunday School meets after Church
Every Tuesday	Food Pantry 11am-1pm
Every Tuesday	NA meets at 6:30pm
Every Tuesday	Bell Choir at 6:45pm
Every Tuesday	Chancel Choir at 7:30pm
Every Friday	AA at 6:00pm
Every Saturday	Al Anon at 10:00am



Worship Assistants

Worship Assistant Schedule				
	Acolyte	Ushers	Lector	Communion Assistants
Sunday, January 2, 2022	Linda Below	Donna Warner Charlie Hempel	Joan Rinker	Deb Storman Linda Below
Sunday, January 9, 2022	Emily Kresge	Beth Reindl Carl Reindl	Jim Werkheiser	
Sunday, January 16, 2022	Eli Kresge	Linda Below Deb Storman	Leanna Wickline	Dawn Bartron Leanna Wickline
Sunday, January 23, 2022	Deb Storman	Charlie Hempel Donna Warner	Linda Below	
Sunday, January 30, 2022	Dawn Weiss	Beth Reindl Carl Reindl	Dawn Bartron	

If you are unable to serve on your scheduled Sunday, please attempt to find a substitute. If you are unable to find a substitute, please contact the church office.

Would you like to volunteer to serve the congregation as a worship assistant? Please contact the church office to be added to the schedule.

Email: parishadmin@stpaultannersvillepa.org Telephone : 570-629—1992

Office hours: Monday through Thursday 9:00am to 1:00pm, Sunday 8:00am to Noon

Christ Café Restarted

A lovely December meal was created and served on December 15, 2021 with ham, sweet potatoes, broccoli, cauliflower & carrots, applesauce and a roll. We served over 58 people. Bill Below and Keely Scheer provided some lovely music for the meal.

Hopefully the repairs to Spies Hall will be completed prior to the January meal, fingers crossed.





SYNOD NEWS

NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD, ELCA

JANUARY 2022 • ISSUE 1 • VOLUME 30

Covid-19 Update & Guidelines

The Latest Situation: The Covid-19 pandemic continues to generate fear, concern, confusion and division across the country and within our own Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod. The most recent developments – some troubling, some hopeful – include:

- The rise of new variants, especially “omicron”;
- The ongoing and in many cases, increasing numbers of new cases;
- The continued reluctance and refusal of some to get vaccinated, or to wear masks;
- On the good side: the increased opportunities for testing, for boosters, and for vaccines for all ages.

Here in our Synod, I now encourage us to use another trustworthy source of information to help guide our decisions concerning the pandemic: the “Covid Act Now Coalition.” This non-profit, web-based resource brings together non-partisan experts in medicine, law, and public policy, to provide objective data and analysis. Their website is being consulted as a reliable source by synods and congregations across the ELCA. From their site, we can see clearly that things are still very threatening here in NE Penn: all 14 of our counties have threat levels of “VERY HIGH” or “SEVERE” – Berks, Carbon, Lehigh, Northampton, and Schuylkill all are in that worst category. Additionally, the vaccination rate is at or below 60% for 7 of those 14 counties. Most of these numbers are worse than the data for many of our neighboring synods, including the Southeastern Penn Synod, whose leaders have nonetheless chosen to put in place stricter guidelines than we have. I believe we can become safer and return to “normal” sooner if we follow their lead.

Dr. Luther Shows The Way:

Almost exactly 500 years ago – in November 1520 – Martin Luther published one of his most ground-breaking treatises: “On the Freedom of a Christian.” He begins the document with this famous declaration: “A Christian is the most free lord of all, subject to none. And a Christian is the most dutiful servant of all, and subject to everyone.”

He goes on to describe how God, through Christ’s sacrificial love for us on the cross, has granted us the grace and the freedom to make our own decisions; but this freedom does not release us to disregard the truth, or our call to care and concern for our neighbor. Luther writes: “Therefore [Christians] should be guided in all [their] works by this thought and contemplate this one thing alone, that [they] may serve and benefit others in all that [they do], considering nothing except the need and the advantage of [the] neighbor.”

So “what does this mean?” The inconvenience of mask wearing; and even the threat of temporary cold-and-flu reactions to vaccinations – these are simply the sacrifices we are called to make, as “the dutiful servants of all, subject to everyone.” It is within this traditionally and theologically Lutheran framing that we maintain our vigilance; and update our guidelines here.

Covid-19 Continued...

Latest Synod Recommendations:

As we prepare for the larger crowds of Christmas Eve – and with Lent, Holy Week and Easter not far away – I am recommending the starting, the continuation, or the resumption, of any and all common-sense and good-neighbor precautions, including:

- Proof of vaccination or a negative test for all indoor events
 - Indoor masking
- Good air circulation, including open windows where feasible
- Social distancing, frequent washing and other effective protocols

Furthermore – at their January 15 meeting, I am encouraging our Synod Council to discuss and decide upon further appropriate actions, which may include mandates that all Synod-sponsored indoor events require masking, proof of vaccination, and/or proof of a negative test. As the duly elected governing body of this Synod, your Synod Council has the right and responsibility to make these decisions for Synod gatherings. When it comes to our individual worshipping communities, our authority is more limited; Synod Council (and myself) can only make clear and strong recommendations – based on the best science, on good conscience and on our common love for our neighbors, especially those who are most vulnerable. In other words, all congregations have the “freedom of a Christian” to decide for themselves how they will choose to act – or refuse to act. I invite us all to follow our baptismal call and Lutheran heritage, to follow God’s will and God’s love for all.

In God’s Love,
Bishop Christopher deForest

MISSION
SUPPORT
2022



Send in your mission support commitments for 2022. You can find the form on the synod website, under the resources tab.

**boundless
god beyond measure**

**JULY 24-28, 2022
MINNEAPOLIS, MN
REGISTER NOW AT ELCA.ORG**

Save the date SYNOD ASSEMBLY 2022

*June 10-11
Reading*



January 2022



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 9:30am AI Anon 2:30pm NA Regional Business meeting
2 2nd Sunday Of Christmas	3	4 10:00am Sewing 11:00am Food Pantry 6:30pm NA	5	6 Epiphany of Our Lord	7	8
9 Baptism of Our Lord	10	11 11:00am Food Pantry 6:30pm NA	12	13	14	15
16 2nd Sunday After Epiphany	17	18 6:30pm Bell Choir 10:00am Sewing 11:00am Food Pantry	19 4:30-6:00pm Christ's Café— tentative	20 7:00pm Council	21	22
23 3rd Sunday After Epiphany	24	25 6:30pm NA 11:00am Food Pantry	26	27	28	29
30 4th Sunday After Epiphany	31	6:30pm Bell Choir				