



St. Paul
Lutheran Church

Walking Together

St. Paul Lutheran Church and School
Catonsville, MD
January 2024

The Season of Epiphany: Season of Mission

The season of Epiphany is sandwiched between the attention-grabbing seasons of Christmas and Lent. It can be easily overshadowed.

But paying attention during these weeks can pay dividends. The readings and the themes of Epiphany show us that God reveals himself for salvation, shines His light into a dark world and invites us to join Him in His mission to call people into His church. Each week at worship there is a mission theme, an invitation for us to shine, to invite others, to proclaim His mercies and presence. Take a look:

January 14th: Philip invites Nathaniel to “come and see” Jesus.

January 21st: Jesus tells us to follow Him and he will make us fishers of men.

January 28th: After He casts out an unclean spirit people everywhere are talking about Jesus.

February 4th: The mother-in-law of Peter responds to her healing with simple service to others.

February 11th: At the Transfiguration, Jesus shows his own divine light to the disciples. In the church he shares that same presence.

Epiphany is a time to consider how you can join Jesus’ mission. How can you receive and shine that saving light? Speaking? Inviting? Simple service? Giving? Prayer? All of the above? Epiphany is the season to challenge yourself and let God lead you into mission service.

Pastor Alms

Congregational Mission Brunch

On Sunday, January 28th, we will join together in the Fellowship Hall to enjoy a meal together! Rev. Dr. Alexey Streltsov, a friend of Pastor Alms will be our featured speaker. He will be visiting from the Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church and will share his inspiring story. You won’t want to miss it. This will be a potluck brunch. Sign-up [HERE](#) or in the church narthex for what you will bring to share.



*We have no mission but to serve
In full obedience to our LORD.
To care for all without reserve.
And spread his liberating Word*
E. PRATT GREEN

From the Congregational President

It's 2024! Happy New Year!

Progress is being made on the sale of the cemetery house. Work is currently being done to survey the land for the next steps to sell.

We met with LCEF about the Capital Campaign. In an effort to optimize our campaign, we are going to wait to start it until we have identified the goals and priorities of the church missions. We are going to work on that in February and will keep the congregation updated. Once we have completed that, we will take the next steps in the Capital Campaign.

I would like to also announce that the school board has found a new Principal to continue the wonderful work that Stan Stigdon has done so far for the school. Suzanne Alms has been hired as the new Principal. She will be able to side-saddle and learn from Stan over the next months before Stan and Dana depart for their overseas missionary work. We look forward to Suzanne taking on this leadership role in the school.

As always, feel free to email or call me if you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

Blessings to all,
Aaron Nelson, nelsaar@yahoo.com.

News From the Elders

The elders for FY 2023-2024 are Kevin Dungey (Chairman), Jim Baeder, Norm Giguere, Roy Krakat, Bill Oldhouser, Jeff Piegols, and Bruce Staudinger. Please contact any of us with personal concerns via email, phone, or in person.

The elders all join me in wishing you a very happy 2024! As we look back at the 2023 Advent and Christmas season at St. Paul, we must give thanks for all the work that went into beautifying the sanctuary, rejuvenating the evergreen swags and wreaths, putting up and decorating the lovely Christmas trees in the altar area, and procuring the many poinsettias, red and white, that graced the altar area. We especially appreciate the work that went into decorating the altar area and replacing the altar paraments all done by a good dozen volunteers on Christmas Eve afternoon. Many thanks!

Finally, as I wrote in my last newsletter article, the elders aspire to increase the opportunities members of St. Paul have to get to know each other better, to have more opportunities for fellowship. While we all treasure and enjoy our coffee hour after church, we probably only get to visit with just a few of our fellow St. Paul members. Stay tuned also as we explore opportunities to provide Bible study during the week either at St. Paul or at a member's home or maybe even both!

In His service,
Kevin Dungey, Board of Elders

Advent & Christmas Thank You

Thank you to all of the people who made our services special.

From the Day School Board

Dear St. Paul Congregation,

On behalf of the Day School Board, I am delighted to announce Suzanne Alms as the newly hired Principal of St. Paul Lutheran School beginning in the 2024/2025 School Year.

Suzanne possesses an impressive background. She has 28 years of teaching experience and has spent a decade in various leadership capacities within various Lutheran educational institutions.

Her most recent roles at St. Paul include serving as Assistant Principal and Upper-Grade Lead Teacher. Her extensive career also features significant positions such as being chair of the literature departments and lead teacher in middle school settings.

In her new role, Suzanne will oversee both the Early Childhood Center (ECC) and Elementary School programs, reporting directly to the Day School Board. Reporting to her will be the ECC and Elementary program staff, the School Secretary, and the Operations Manager.

Suzanne will officially commence her duties as Principal on June 1, 2024. During the next 5 months Stan and Suzanne will be able to work together to promote a smooth transition. Suzanne will begin attending Day School Board meetings beginning in January and will be part of the budgeting process going into next year. She will also be directly involved in the hiring of her 5th grade teacher replacement as well as a new 2nd grade teacher to replace our retiring 2nd grade teacher.

I hope each of you will join with the Day School Board in congratulating Suzanne and supporting her with your prayers as she embraces this new chapter in her career.

Carolyn Louden
Day School Board Chair

Flower Chart

The flower chart for 2024 is posted on the bulletin board. There are many opportunities to decorate the sanctuary and commemorate an important person or event in your life. January still has openings for the 14th and the 28th. Consider sponsoring flowers.



Women's Guild - LWML

Thanks to all who helped with the food bags for St Thomas. We delivered 25 complete bags and 30 hams as well as a box of additional food items.

Ladies, January is a busy month, please mark your calendars. January 23rd will be our 1st meeting of the new year at the home of Pat Wesselman. Meeting begins at 10, we will be gathering snack items and boxing them to send to our college students with notes of encouragement. Pack a bag lunch and plan on staying after the meeting to enjoy some fellowship. Remember, we are providing the soup for the Health Care Kit packing event on January 24th at church. I will be reaching out later in the month for volunteers to make and serve soup.

Carolyn Louden

Together We Make a Difference

Health Care Kits

In January, St. Paul church and school will be making a difference! We will put together health care kits that the Lutheran Mission Society will hand out in Baltimore for those who need them. There is great need in Baltimore.



What is our goal? 250 health care kits.

How will we do this? During January each grade, the ECC, and the church members will donate items for the kits. Church members are asked to bring in toothbrushes, travel size toothpaste, or travel size/small liquid soap. There is a table across from the women's restroom for collection. Deadline for item drop-off is Sunday, January 21st. Please note: Unopened packages only, "travel size" and small packages preferred.

Gathering Event: *Soup and Sandwich Fellowship* On January 24th at 6 p.m. church and school will gather to share a meal prepared by the Ladies Guild. We will then work as a team and assemble the health care kits that will be distributed locally by the Lutheran Mission Society. [Sign up HERE](#) so that we know how many to expect. All hands are welcome!

Thank you for being a part of this. Together we can make a difference!

Lutheran Books & Beer

In January we begin a new book for Lutheran Books and Beer: *I Am Not Afraid: Demon Possession and Spiritual Warfare* by Robert H. Bennett. This is a fascinating first-hand account of the spiritual warfare in Africa and closer to home. Is spiritual warfare something new to the Church? Bennett reviews what the Bible, Church Fathers, and contemporary Lutheran leaders have to say. Lutheran Books and Beer meets January 25th at 7 p.m. at the Rathskellar in Elkridge. All are welcome. The book is available here: <https://www.cph.org/i-am-not-afraid-demon-possession-and-spiritual-warfare> or also available from Amazon.

Grace: An Introduction to Lutheranism

Pastor Alms will be teaching this class beginning on January 15th. It will meet on Mondays at 7 p.m. in the 5th Grade classroom (Room 203). All are welcome.

Folders Wanted

After 12 years of faithful service, our bulletin folders are ready to retire. Karen Puls and her mom worked together every week to fold our bulletins until her mom's passing. Karen and Mike continue to get our bulletins folded every week, including all the extra bulletins during the Advent and Lenten seasons and we are very grateful. Now is the time for someone or some team of people to take over the collating, stapling, and folding. It can be done at church or brought to your house and returned. Takes an average of 2 hours/week. If you are willing to volunteer on a weekly or monthly basis, please contact Dana at dana.stigdon@splscatonville.org.

Kingdom Growth Ministries

Lutheran Mission Society – Compassion Place Ministries

For several months, we have learned about the Kingdom Growth ministries that St. Paul supports through our budgeted funds. One such ministry is the Lutheran Mission Society (LMS).



LMS was founded in 1905, with the mission of "... ministering to the needs of the body with food, clothing and shelter; ministering to the needs of the soul with the Good News of Jesus." (website) It was originally formed to assist immigrants coming through the Port of Baltimore, but the ministry has changed over the years to meet the changing and challenging needs of the people.

There is a network of 10 Compassion Centers, located throughout Maryland, with one in York, PA. These help those in need with food, clothing and personal care items, while sharing with them God's Word. Each Compassion Place Ministry site consists of:

Compassion Center - where clothing and food are offered free, along with spiritual care and prayer.

Thrift Center - clothes, housewares, toys, jewelry, collectibles, etc. can be purchased at bargain prices. The proceeds fund the Compassion Place ministries.

Donation Center - in-kind donations, new and gently used, are received. LMS is a 501(c)(3) charity and donations are tax deductible. They are also a Recognized Service Organization (RSO) of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.

Also part of the LMS ministry is the Compassionate Grace Counseling Center and a Housing Program.

There are many opportunities for service. Volunteers are needed to sort clothing, work in the Thrift Store, help with donation pick-ups, collect needed items, or assemble kits. At Christmas, there is the opportunity to adopt a needy family and provide gift and food baskets. You can also donate your unused vehicle to LMS.

A special service opportunity will happen this month. The school and church will be collecting items for health kits, which will be given out to the homeless. The school classes and church will be bringing in specific items for the kits. Please read the "Together We Make a Difference" article in the newsletter for more information and for items the congregation is asked to contribute.

For information about Compassion Center locations, hours, and volunteer needs, Google "Lutheran Mission Society". The headquarters are located at 601 Hammonds Lane, Brooklyn. Phone: 410-636-0123

Fellowship Hour Sign Up

Don't miss the opportunity to make Coffee Hour a little more special. Looking for volunteers to provide munchies/fruit/edibles for the refreshment table downstairs in the Fellowship Hall. In addition to supplying the food, you are asked to set up and clean up. There is an instruction sheet on the bulletin board near the sign-up sheet.

Kid's Christmas Morning



Many thanks once again to the St Paul Community for your Mission spirit and volunteer support! Lots of help is always needed to make this event happen: planning, registration, publicity, ordering, logistics, hosting, crafting, greeting, and cleanup. We had 65 children with their parents and grandparents join us for the Christmas message, crafting and building gingerbread houses, and of course a visit with Santa! It's a wonderful Gospel Outreach program for our neighbors and community

as we celebrate the true 'reason for the season,' the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

We thank the KCM Committee members Irene Giguere, Kate Baeder, Betsy Mitchell, Maria Frantz, and Karyn Borth; Opening and Chapel Leader - Stan Stigdon; Registration and Publicity - Dana Stigdon, Pam Johnsson, Vanessa Pacheco, Irene Giguere and Sara Ruzicka; Craft leaders - Kirsten Hall, Melissa Sunstrom, Maria Frantz, Suzanne Giguere, Lisa Siegfried, Dasha Frech and Emily Kolenda; Gingerbread Houses - Betsy Mitchell, Robbin Dungey, Christina and Josh Unglesbee; Santa and His Elf - John Borth and Suzanne Alms; Greeters - Norm Giguere, Kevin Dungey, and Linda Klingmeyer; Photography - Jim Lister; Setup and clean up - Brian Erwin, Dave Carnes, Sally Foks, and many of those already listed who worked double duty!



Concordia Prep



[Register here.](#)

SED President's Forum

Join President Harmon on Zoom on Tuesday, January 9 at 11 AM or 7 PM for an update on mission and ministry in the District. President Harmon will share the strategic path forward and update you on new initiatives taking place in 2024. [Register here.](#)