

CORNERSTONE

“THERE IS A PLACE FOR YOU AT ST. PAUL’S”

December 2019

St. Paul’s Lutheran Church

Volume 25, Issue 11

Dear Partners in Ministry,

The writer of Luke describes a scene where the disciples are traveling along the road to Emmaus and encounter a stranger. They invite him to walk with them and share in their conversation. Later they sit to have a meal. It was then scriptures tell us that *“When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. **Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him;** and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, *“Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?” (Luke 24:30-32)**

This encounter occurs after Jesus’ resurrection and before he ascends to be with his father. Wait, you say, is that not a Lenten story? What does it have to do with Advent? Advent is a time of reflection when we recall the gift of our eternal salvation that came in the form of a little baby. It is a time of waiting for the promised fulfillment of our savior’s return. It is the affirming of the hope that fills us and strengthens us in our daily journey. And it is also the ‘now and not yet’ of our Christian faith – redemption and hope, reminding us that the journey to the cross began with the birth of a child. That the promise of eternal life began with the transformation that took place in the life, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Advent is also strangely nestled in between the commercialization of Thanksgiving and Christmas. In the business of this time of year it is so easy to get distracted by the many tasks we have. Maybe it is

the last-minute gift purchases. Or getting together for various festivities and dinners that most likely began with light-up night events, pre-thanksgiving/ /thanksgiving dinners and quickly marching into holiday parties. It is possible to get so distracted, like the disciples focused on their intended journey, who missed that the stranger among them was not really a stranger but their revered teacher and friend. They were caught up in the news of what had happened to him, their pain and confusion, or the unexpected, unplanned loss of his presence. We too might miss the reflective moment of waiting in anticipation due to our ever-growing challenges. We may have missed the opportunities of growth that we experienced this year because they came as unexpected, unplanned outcomes. What were those moments -God sightings- where we experienced God in amazing ways? Was it God’s abiding peace as we struggled with a loved one’s illness or death? Was it the comforting presence of a family member or neighbor who came to our rescue by helping with a too heavy grocery bag, or too heavy pan of deliciously prepared soup for the church bazaar? Whatever and wherever, let us take a moment to pause this season and say thank you.

In the spirit of saying thank you, I extend a heartfelt thank you to the members of PLUM. You have journeyed with me in unexpected ways. You challenged me to open my eyes and recognize Jesus in the ministries that you offer, in the comradery of pastors and in the opportunity to be a part of PLUM’s evolving ministries. You welcomed this stranger and made me feel at home. You invited me to walk alongside you. On Sunday, November 3rd, I was given the gift to be one of your shepherds, to preside at

your tables as an ordained pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America serving at PLUM. Like the disciples, my heart has been burning with the joy of being a living witness of Christ with and among you. Thank you for helping me to notice God in your midst.

So, as we enter Advent and this new liturgical calendar year, with more changes anticipated, may we in our reflection continue to see God present in our midst. May our eyes be opened to the many ways that God is calling us to live out our ministries in our families, our neighborhoods and our communities. May we continue to recognize the stranger among us and offer welcome. May our hearts burn with joy as we listen to God's voice and guidance. Remembering that in the midst of it all, we can exclaim with confidence and joy... "Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again."

"THANKS BE TO GOD!"

+Pastor Brenda Henry
on behalf of the PLUM Pastoral Team



The Annual Meeting for election of President, Vice President, Recording Secretary and two council members at Large and the adoption of the 2020 Budget will be held on Sunday December 8th following the worship service. Nominees are Jill A. Shook, President; Nancy Pollo, Vice President, Scott Latta, Recording Secretary and Lee Jones and Charlotte Stemmler, Council members at Large. A copy of proposed budget is also included. Make plans to attend.



Do you know the meaning of Hanging of the Greens? On Thursday, December 19th St. Paul's having a Family Advent night beginning at 5:30 p.m. The evening will begin with a Potluck Dinner (so bring your favorite dish), following the dinner, Rev. Henry will present the history of Hanging of the Greens. Then the fun begins...those present will prepare St. Paul's for the Christmas season by Hanging the Greens. There will be work for all that wish to stay. So mark your calendar now and make sure you do not miss out on the fun that we will have that evening. Any questions, contact Ann Morrocco about the food and Jill A. Shook about the activities.



Our Christmas Eve Candlelight service will begin at 7:00 p.m. Rev. Liz Mayforth will be leading worship that evening. Our organist for the evening will be Mark Gulden. There will be Holy Eucharist and A Candlelight service. Make plans NOW to attend as we celebrate the Birth of our Savior.



St. Paul's committed \$2,800.00 towards Mission support for 2019. With only one month remaining, we are short of our commitment by **\$245.00**. We have in the past years, exceeded our commitment. Let's try to do it again this year.



Poinsettias

The Christmas season is approaching and it is time to order poinsettia plants to decorate our sanctuary. The choices are red or white, at the cost of \$7.00 per plant. All orders and money are due by Sunday, December 15th and money is due by Sunday, December 22nd. To order, please fill out the information below and return completed form in the offering plate or by mail to:

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
210 North Jefferson Avenue
Canonsburg, PA 15317-3828

You may also order by email at stpaulscbg@verizon.net.



Name _____

Please order ___Red Poinsettias \$7.00 each

Please order ___White Poinsettias \$7.00 each

In memory of _____

In memory of _____

In memory of _____

In memory of _____

In honor of _____

In honor of _____

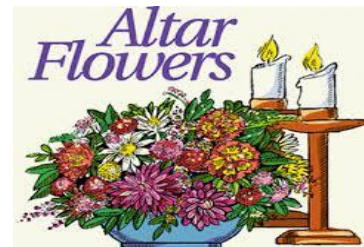
In honor of _____

Paid _____ (date) _____

Cash _____ Check _____

Did You Know about this Giving Option for Seniors?

As part of The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016, Congress permanently reinstated a taxpayer's ability to take annual required minimum distributions (RMD's) from their IRA's and contribute those withdrawals directly to charitable organizations, treating them as tax-free distributions. These transactions are called qualified charitable distributions (QCD's). If you are age 70½ or older, you generally must withdraw a RMD each year from your traditional IRA and/or employer-sponsored retirement plan. This new legislation gives you a convenient way to satisfy IRA distribution requirements, support charitable causes, and lower your adjust gross income all at the same time. If you are interested in contributing directly to St. Paul's in this manner, contact your financial institution(s) where your IRA's are invested to see if they can accommodate your request.



The Flower Chart for 2020 is on the bulletin board in the Narthex of the church. You can sign up at any time. If you do not attend church regularly and have any questions on dates remaining contact the church, 724-747-4418 (Jill's phone number). The cost of two vases is either \$20.00 or \$25.00. Payment is due by the last Sunday of the month that you donate flowers

Also you can sign up for sponsoring of the Eternal Candle for a month. Contact Jill if you are interested. The cost is \$20.00 for a month.



December Assistants and Sponsors

Assisting Minister

- ❖ December 1 – Ann Morrocco
- ❖ December 8 – Carol Ferens
- ❖ December 15 – Corey Ferens
- ❖ December 22 – Ann Morrocco
- ❖ December 24 – Ann Morrocco
- ❖ December 29 – Carol Ferens

Eternal Candle

Karen and Logan Billingham

Fellowship

- ❖ December 8 – Jill A. Shook
- ❖ December 19 - Advent Family Event

Flowers

- ❖ December 1 – Carol Jean Straka
- ❖ December 8 – Karen & Logan Billingham
- ❖ December 15 – Carol Jean Straka
- ❖ December 22 – Ann Morrocco
- ❖ December 29

Lectors

- ❖ December 1 – Lee Jones
- ❖ December 8 – Mark Pollo
- ❖ December 15
- ❖ December 22
- ❖ December 29

If you are interested in serving as an assistant or sponsoring the eternal candle or flowers, please contact the church office (724-745-5962) or email: stpaulscbg@verizon.net.



Worship Schedule

December 1	Rev. Martin Rafanan
December 8	Rev. Brenda Henry
December 15	Rev. John Gropp
December 22	Rev. Liz Mayforth
December 24	Rev. Liz Mayforth
December 29	Vicar Mandy Gilberti

Pastor's schedule is subject to change without notice.



Keep in your prayers: Ev, Matthew, Anna Mae, Nancy, Pat, Alex, Mark, Albert, Patty, Pam, Virginia, Jennifer, Betty Jane, Rich, Rachel, Pat, Donna, Cooper, Edward, Anna Mae, Eddie, Randy, Steve, Barbara, Tom, Charlotte, John, Tondi, Pastor Wayne, Kelly, Pastor Brandt, Pastor Austin, Mike, Colin, Jeff, Tracey, the Miller, Paulick, Galano, Burchesky, Grove, Richmond families. If anyone should be added or removed, please contact the church office (724-745-5962) or email: stpaulscbg@verizon.net.



**BIRTHDAYS
THIS MONTH**

Charlotte Stemmler	December 2
Lindsey Nimal	December 3
Anna Mae DeWalt	December 5
Ann Morrocco	December 6
Jordyn Porter	December 6
Bridget Layton	December 11
Jonathan Bowland	December 13
Rev. Brenda Henry	December 17
Aaliyah Gilpin	December 20
Scott Latta	December 31