

The Epistle

*December 2018
Monthly Newsletter
St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church*



Mark Your Calendar

12.1

ChristkindlMarket
10am-5pm

12.9

Carols & Cookies
6:30pm

12.16

Love Box Project
3pm

12.24

Youth-led Christmas Eve
Service 7pm
Traditional Christmas Eve
Service with Communion
9pm

**Hats & Mittens collected
all month on the
benevolence tree!**

The ChristkindlMarket is just hours away!

It has been a fun journey getting this event together. The Walkersville Historical Society are incredible hosts for this event. They have thought of many different acts to draw people to us. The committee would like to thank everyone who made anything to sell, thank those that have helped or plan to help and to thank those that have spread the word to come to the Mart. We hope it will be fun and fruitful and we will let you know how we did.

Advent Series: The Good, The Bad & The Ugly

Bethel Lutheran Church (9664 Opossumtown Pike, Frederick) is hosting a series of midweek Advent services and invites the community to join them. The series is entitled The Good, The Bad & The Ugly. On Wednesday evenings (December 5, 12, 19) the congregation will gather at 6:30 for a pot luck dinner and 7:00 for an informal worship service. Since St. Paul's and Bethel are considering the possibility of sharing a pastor in the future, this might be a good opportunity to get to know some of Bethel's people.

Pastor's Corner

“Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel’, which means, ‘God is with us.’”

—Matthew 1:23

I recently read an article about a pastor in Chicago who invented a novel way to remind church people of the reality of our Savior's birth. Just before the Christmas Eve service this pastor distributed cow manure under all the pews of his beautiful church. As worshipers came in, dressed in their finest and filled with the spirit of the holidays, they couldn't help but sniff the air and begin to wonder, as if someone close by was in need of some antacids. At first the worshipers squirmed and shifted about in discomfort. But as they sat there they started to remember the lowly life of a homeless little child called "Immanuel" – "God with us" ..

I can just imagine how beautiful that church nave was before the pastor began depositing his own kind of decoration. I can envision large and beautiful Christmas trees decorated by all the Sunday school classes. I can imagine the poinsettia plants – red ones, pink ones, white ones – all given in memory of some wonderful saint and all placed so lovingly around the altar. I can even see the heave garland flowing over the rails of the choir loft. Beautiful and proper decorations all.

But let's admit it. By now, these decorations remind us more of Christmas than they do of Christ – the one who was born homeless, and in a stinky manger. Scripture reminds us that the birth of Jesus was not pretty. Children were being killed by Herod. Jesus' family was forced to flee. Our Lord was born a baby refugee (like those displaced people we see on the news), on the run from oppressive rulers. Quite literally, Jesus Christ was born in the dung of our world.

Apparently, for God, Immanuel really means that he is with us. He is with us even in the places we don't want to be. He is with us in the places we wish did not exist. He is with us and with all who are in those places. He is with the homeless ones in Frederick County we read about. He is with the refugees we see on the tube. He is in some pretty stinky places.

The place I am in is starting to stink. And I don't mean my seat in our church building. I mean my great ability to settle for Christmas and not Christ. I mean – I enjoy Christmas, and all the trimmings and decorations. But the point of Immanuel's name is just this: I am much more likely to meet Jesus in the stench of manure or the filth of the ghetto than I am to meet Him in the best decorated sanctuary or the most festive shopping mall. How did he say it?

Then the king will say to those at his right hand, "Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.... Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." Matthew 25:34-40

**Here at St Paul's our worship services run like clockwork.
This does not happen by accident**

As chair of Worship and Arts I would like to take a moment to extend my heartfelt thanks for all the support from the committee and especially those who do their part to make everything run smoothly, so we can all have a meaningful time of worship.

Ellen Bucheimer who ensures that we have a lector for each and every worship service throughout the year.

Diane Fauble for coordinating the many details needed to experience the communion service and all the elements involved.

Kay Wachter for her tireless activities so that we have ushers at all services.

Mary Ann King who schedules all the people who assist the pastor during distribution of The Lord's Supper.

Nancy Cochran with her attention to all the detail necessary in making sure we have music.

Margaret Powers & Patty Rimel and their never failing ability to beautify the altar with flowers.

Mary Ann Ferguson who keeps the altar linens pristine and in good repair.

Phil Smith who calls us all to worship with his unfailing presence and skill ringing the bell.

Many thanks to all and best wishes for a meaningful Advent as we prepare to celebrate Our Savior's Birth.

—Betsy Galliher

Thanks for Thankoffering!

It is with many thanks that our quilt fund this year has surpassed \$500! Your generous contributions will provide transportation of 20 quilts to Bridge to Hope in Homestead, FL as well as a monetary contribution to their organization.



TIS THE SEASON OF GIVING

LOVE BOXES December 16th

@ 3pm

Join us as we make

"Love Boxes".

The boxes will be delivered to the bereaved, shut-ins, and elderly members of our church community.

Please bring donations of cookies, fruit, and snacks to be included in the boxes.

After the boxes are packed, we will share dessert, fellowship, and the Christmas spirit.

We hope you will join us!



Thank you for another successful year of filled stockings!

St. Paul's was able to provide 166 filled stockings to the area's children in need through the Holiday Toy Shoppe this year. A total of 2,432 stockings have brightened Christmas mornings and eased the burden for so many families over the past 14 years.

A huge THANK YOU to Billie Jo Kahler and her family for working tirelessly all through the year to make sure this project has the supplies it needs and it runs smoothly. She and her family have endured countless trips to the Dollar Tree and she is known to have brought cashiers at Walmart near to tears with the amount of school supplies she procures. THANK YOU!!

Year End Offering Challenge

Again this year, St. Paul's Leadership has been approached with an anonymous \$2,000 offering challenge, to help offset any shortfalls the budget has realized over the year.

If members of the congregation give \$2,000 over and above their normal giving, this member will match that \$2,000 contribution. If you are writing a check, please write "challenge" in the memo line.

Deadline is December 30, 2018.

THANK YOU!!





2019 Council Nominees

Nominations for Council for next year are open during the month of December and if interested then see a member of Council. Nominations can not be made from the floor.

Congregational Meeting is January 27th.

Current Nominees are:

Gary Wachter, Linda Yopp,
Betsy Galliher & Sheila Kahler

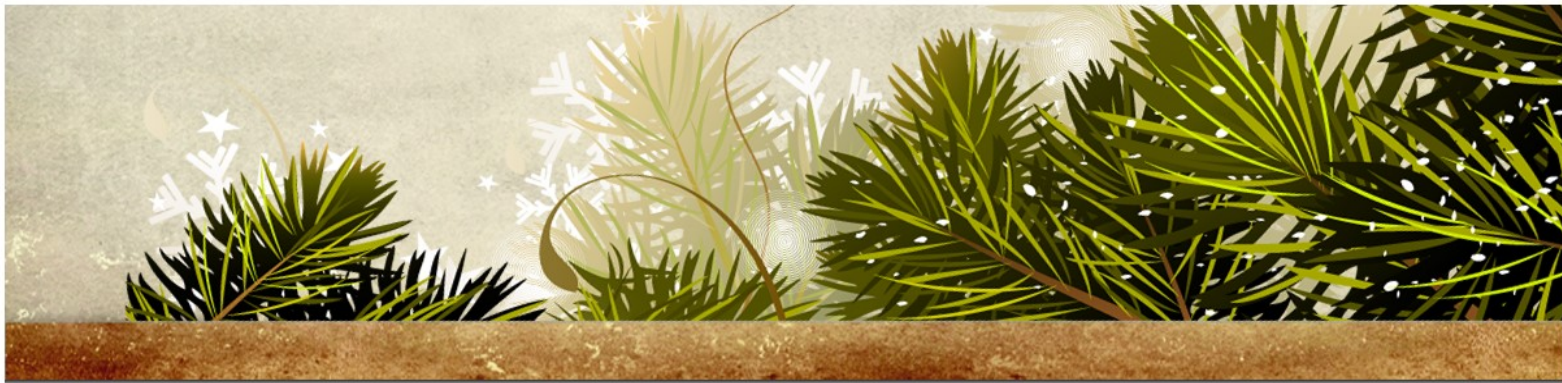
Around the church...

Check out the bulletin boards at the side entrance of the church and in the Parish Hall for some interesting information about the Lutheran Campus Ministries happening in Maryland and the ELCA's Young Adults in Global Ministry program. As well Tori's new newsletter!

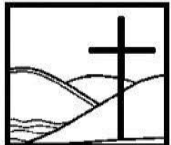


Happening Around Town:

- * Town Christmas Tree Lighting— December 5th 7:30pm @ Creamery Park
- * Bill Powell's Annual Holiday Concert— December 19th -7-8pm - @ Glade UCC
- * Christmas Concert— December 23rd - 6 to 8 PM - @ St. Joseph-on-Carrollton Manor Catholic Church (5843 Manor Woods Road, Frederick)
Glade UCC Handbell Choir will be performing



MAR-LU



RIDGE

So blessed to have MAR-LU-RIDGE!

It is a blessing to have such a wonderful outdoor ministry camp so close to our congregation. St. Paul's members participated for the first time in MLR's annual Walkathon this fall. Our members and your contributions were a part of the walk's great success. There were 51 walkers total and many donors who contributed from afar. The amount raised was the most in recent years: \$18,710 plus \$6,000 matching gift for a total of **\$24,710!** The gifts are used to support the Campership and Facilities funds.

Our confirmands recently spent the weekend at the camp for their Confirmation Weekend. It was a wonderful chance to learn from and with other Lutheran congregations.

We look forward to celebrating MLR's 60th anniversary in 2019 and we pray that their ministry to the next generation continues.



Carols & Cookies December 9th at 6:30pm

All are invited to spread some holiday cheer to our church neighbors—no need to be an expert singer. More wise words from Buddy the Elf— *"It's just like talking, except longer and louder and you move your voice up and down."* And then return to the Parish Hall for cookies and cocoa.

December 23rd



We are continuing to enjoy the new Children's Ministry program every 4th Sunday of the month. This month the children's sermon and Roots & Wings will be on December 23rd. During the service children are invited to the front for a children's sermon with Pastor Ron. Afterwards, children are led back to the classrooms to continue learning with stories, activities and crafts. Parents can stay with their children or return to the service.

Upcoming Events:

Preparing for the New Year! Welcome 2019!

Annual Report Due: January 8th

Congregational Meeting: January 27th

Christmas Eve Worship

St. Paul's will have two worship services on Christmas Eve.

The 7 o'clock evening service is a youth-led service with a Children's Sermon & Christmas Carols, perfect for families with children who need to get home before Santa arrives.

The 9 o'clock evening service is a traditional service with the Chancel Choir and Holy Communion.

The sanctuary is beautifully decorated with our traditional Chrismon tree. The pew and window candles light the night & bright poinsettias decorate the altar area. Join us as we celebrate together the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

