

# The Epistle

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | FEBRUARY 2019  
ST. PAUL'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

14 & 19 WEST PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, WALKERSVILLE, MD 21793  
www.stpaulslutheranchurch.org | 301-845-4600

## Souper Bowl Sunday: Goal 100 cans of soup

*You're the MVP in the battle against hunger in our community.*

Help stock the shelves with soup on February 3rd, by bringing donations of canned soup for the GVCS Food Bank. With your help we can reach our goal of 100 cans of soup. Just think of how many warm meals that will provide on these cold winter nights to our neighbors in need. Donations will be gathered near the time chest in the overflow area.

**Note from Glade Valley Food Bank:** The Food Bank is having a **Souper Bowl** in Jan/Feb. Please donate non-perishable food items that are eaten in a bowl such as: **Soup, Spaghetti & other pastas, Spaghetti Sauce, Beef Stew, Baked Beans, Canned Fruit & Apple Sauce, Cereal, etc.** Email: [gvfb21w@gmail.com](mailto:gvfb21w@gmail.com)

*Baskets at the entrances of the church & parish hall will collect your donations year round.*

## World Day of Prayer— March 1st

*"COME—EVERYTHING IS READY!" This invitation from Jesus serves as the foundation of the 2019 World Day of Prayer (WDP.) Facilitated by the WDP Slovenia Committee, focusing on the parable of the great banquet.*

The first organized "day of prayer for the world" in the United States was held on February 20, 1920. Now, hundreds of thousands of women (and men, youth and children) from around the world and in every region gather to collectively worship on the first Friday in March. Each year, a different country serves as writer for the worship service and other materials. World Day of Prayer USA promotes justice and equality for women through prayer, partnerships, service and celebration. Would you like to raise up prayers with thousands of others throughout the world? Stay tuned for more details about how St. Paul's will be participating. If you have questions or would like to participate please contact Belinda ([daydrmr24@msn.com](mailto:daydrmr24@msn.com) or 240-315-5030.)

## On the Calendar

- Feb 3<sup>rd</sup> - Souper Bowl Sunday
- Feb 5<sup>th</sup> – Congregational Life 7pm
- Feb 11<sup>th</sup> – Finance 7pm
- Feb 12<sup>th</sup>— Council 7pm
- Feb 24<sup>th</sup>— Sarah Lefler from Mar-Lu-Ridge visiting
- Feb 25<sup>th</sup>— Worship & Arts 7:30pm
- Feb 26<sup>th</sup> - Executive 6:30pm

# Thrivent Action Team Kits

*New year, new look, new possibilities to LIVE GENEROUSLY!*

Members who lead a Thrivent Action Team will be sent a new and improved kit that includes some of the same items as before — seed money, T-shirts (in a new color) and promotional materials — and a few new items to help make their project even more impactful. A landing page on [LiveGenerously.com](http://LiveGenerously.com) includes a launch countdown kit and shareable images to promote the kit.

## How are kit items changing?

- All paper products in the kit are fully recyclable.
- Leader notebooks make it easier to lead a team by organizing the steps and minimizing the information a member will need to read. They also include lots of blank lined pages, so they can live on after the project.
- The new “banner” will come as a string of five felt pennants that members can hang at their project location and then distribute to volunteers as a keepsake of their work together.
- Volunteer pocket notebooks and sticker packs have been added to help spread Thrivent’s brand and remind volunteers of their experience. Members have the option to include these in their kit and hand out to volunteers after the project.

To apply for a Thrivent Action Team, simply identify a community need and fill out the application at [Thrivent.com/actionteams](http://Thrivent.com/actionteams). For project inspiration and to see what others have done, go to [Thrivent.com/actionteamshub](http://Thrivent.com/actionteamshub).



Action Teams have been helpful at St. Paul's for our fundraisers, providing dinner at the Soup Kitchen, helping to fill Christmas Stockings, supporting mission trips, giving to the Food Bank. The possibilities are limited only to your imagination and the community's need. If you have an action team and need help getting started, please see Belinda.

# Mar-Lu-Ridge

*Camp Director, Sarah Lefler will be visiting February 24th.*

Registration for summer camp is open and information about the camps and available camperships are on the side bulletin board in the church. You can always check out their website anytime at [www.mar-lu-ridge.org](http://www.mar-lu-ridge.org). Please take a moment to check out all the camp is offering as they celebrate their 60th year in ministry!

Camp Director, Sarah Lefler will be joining us for worship on February 24th to give us an update about all that's happening at the camp for people of all ages.

We have been blessed in 2018 to take part in several events on the Ridge and each one has been a fabulous experience for everyone involved. We look forward to hearing about what's in store for 2019!

## Love for Love Boxes

Many thanks have been received from the recipients of the Love Boxes:

Dorothy Fogle wanted “all [her] dear friends” to know how much she appreciated it.

Kathryn Nicodemus was pleasantly surprised by her Love Box.

Sherley Moss appreciated the cards & cookies, flowers and visit.

Charlotte Jones sends her thanks to the helpers for all the goodies.

Ella Ramacciotti also sends her thanks for the cards, prayers and love box!

This was a wonderful outreach, we hope will become an annual tradition. Thank you for helping to brighten the holidays for so many.



## ***Pastor's Corner*** - "Gifts Given, Gifts Received"

According to St. Paul, our Lord Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). I am sure you have experienced the blessing Jesus is referring to – the blessing you realize as you give a gift to another person. Remember, for instance, that special gift you bought for your lover. It cost more money than you expected to spend, but you knew how deeply he or she would rejoice in receiving it. So you bought it, and even as you made the monetary transaction, you began to rejoice inside, anticipating your lover's delight in the gift. That's a blessing.

Likewise, you can remember being the recipient of a very special gift. And likewise, you have felt that joy well up inside you when your lover presented you with a gift. The gift was a blessing – but the deeper blessing was what the gift represented – the love that someone had for you.

Gifts given, gifts received, are not for lovers only. Gifts signify and bring joy to us as kids, parents, friends and neighbors – and even, I am happy to say, as pastors and parishioners. Before I became a pastor, I never expected that this blessing of giving and receiving would take place in ministry. But it does, and receiving gifts as a pastor does the same for me as receiving gifts as a father, husband, friend or neighbor.

Let me explain. For the first seven years of my ministry as a pastor, there were not many gifts to go around. I struggled in my first congregation. There was division and suspicion, and I didn't seem to be able to make any helpful changes in that place. It seemed there were very few gifts being given or received there. I remember coming home from church on many Christmas Eves tired and depressed, and just glad that the service was over and I was home.

What a surprise it was on Christmas Eve at my second call. When the church service was over and I was taking my robes off, the president of the congregation came into my office and handed me an envelope. In it was a Christmas card and several hundreds of dollars. Unbeknownst to me the congregation had taken up a special offering and presented it to me as a Christmas present. I know Jesus says it is more blessed to give- but let me tell you – it was a wonderful blessing to receive such a generous surprise that evening. Vickie and I had little kids at home, and like any young family, we put that gift to use very quickly. But the deeper blessing of course was what the card and dollars signified; wonderful people cared about us and received us into their fellowship. And they wanted us to know they loved us, so they did for us what they did for the other people they loved –they gave us a gift.

Not all congregations do this. I have served five congregations as pastor. Four of the five have let me know of their love for me every Christmas by these special gifts. I want to say thank you – not only for the gift St. Paul's treasurer Amy Mildenstein gave me on your behalf Christmas Eve, but for what it means to me. Thank you for receiving me into your midst. Thank you for your love. I know our time together is temporary, and that is the way it should be, but I want you to know that I enjoy ministering to you and I love and care for you too. I was blessed to receive your gift. I hope and pray that you will be blessed in my time with you.

Pastor Ron

PS – You may be interested to know what I am doing with that money. So far I have used it to register for two classes at Frederick Community College and to have one of my bikes tuned up. And I will probably use the rest of it to purchase flowers for my yard this coming spring.



# Mardi Gras Game Night

w/ Potluck Dinner

**March 2nd 5pm  
in the Parish Hall**

## Meeting Minutes

There has been a request for a return of the committee meeting minutes to the Epistle. To make this happen, all committees need to have a copy of their minutes to the office by the second Sunday of the month. Digital copies are preferred, but paper copies can be dropped off in the office mailbox in the Parish Hall. As we transition Office Administrators please be patient and kind as we all acclimate to a new routine. We will also investigate the possibility of the meeting minutes on the website. Thank you!

## Mission Trip 2019

***Announcing Mission Possible 2019:  
Destination– Wind River Reservation in Wyoming.***

We will be serving in Wind River June 30th through July 5th. We are excited to serve on this unique reservation of Arapaho and Shoshone. We have a team of 10 participants still discerning their participation in the trip. Please pray for our potential team members as they determine their role this year. And thank you for your continued support of the youth ministry mission trips.



(Northern Arapaho)



(Eastern Shoshone)

## Have you been tidying up?

We would love your discarded clutter for our Spring Yard Sale on March 8th and 9th. Donations can be dropped off at the Parish Hall beginning on Thursday, March 7th. More details to come in the March Epistle.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday, March 1st— World Day of Prayer

Saturday, March 2nd—Mardi Gras Game Night

Wednesday, March 6th— Ash Wednesday Service

Saturday, March 9th— Youth Group Yard Sale

(sneak peak Friday March 8th)

Lenten Soup & Sandwich with Devotions begins March 13th