

EPISTLE

August 2020

Saint Paul's Lutheran Church

14 & 19 W. Pennsylvania Avenue, Walkersville, MD 21793

www.SaintPaulslutheranchurch.org 301-845-4600

August Birthdays

August 8 - Lukas Pank

August 10 - Amy Koch

August 14 - Kate Stottlemeyer

August 15 - Eric Chesnik

**August 16 - Glen Dayhoff
Rebekah King**

**August 19 - Riley Bruning
Ellen Hatgi
Sue-Etta Long**

August 20 - Phyllis Dayhoff

August 21 - Thomas Kelley

August 22 - Jay Leins

August 28 - Trish Valcarcel

Returning to School

Frederick East Classical Homeschool Co-op will be returning to the classrooms at St. Paul's this fall. Their board has worked diligently to arrive at a safe re-opening plan with the safety of their families and ours. FEC will continue to use the building on Monday and Wednesday through the school year, please limit your visits to St. Paul's on the days. One way they are addressing health concerns this year is to increase social distancing by dividing the students; K-5th grade will attend on Monday and 6th-12th grade attend on Wednesday. FEC has also helped in the procurement of sanitation items, such as hand sanitizer stations that they will have throughout the buildings and invited St. Paul's members to use them as needed for our services when we are able to reopen. The continued partnership between FEC and St. Paul's has been a blessing to both parties in helping weather this latest storm. If you have questions or concerns, Belinda Burriss is continuing as the St. Paul's Liaison and will be happy to help. Please continue to pray for all the students, teachers, faculty and volunteers in our community and our country as they begin a new school year.

Peace,
Belinda
Children & Youth Ministry Coordinator
St Paul's Lutheran Church- Walkersville, MD

Vicar's Valley

"There is nothing that can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus."

I know that some of you may be anxious to come back to in-person worship and that you may be feeling separated from your church family and from God during this prolonged absence from being inside the church building. You will see included in this edition of the Epistle a letter from your Council that describes the path they have been on to discern a safe and loving means of return. In response to the survey that was sent out, 70% of respondents felt that they were not ready to return to worship within the four walls of our building which guided some of the decision-making process taken on by Council. You can be assured that although the physical doors were closed to worship, we never stopped proclaiming the good news of Christ and have found that we are reaching folks in new and exciting ways.

We have been discovering new pathways forward as we navigate the complexities of technology, as well as making it work for our worship experiences. We are seeking to attempt new ways of worship, one of which will be a modified service outside at 8:30 am beginning on August 23, 2020. This service will include the readings and Gospel for the day, along with prayers and a sermon. The service will be entirely spoken by me with the potential for response to the prayers. The service will be weather dependent with announcements being made as soon as possible in the event of cancellation. If you need a chair, umbrella, or anything else, you will have to provide that on your own. Our 9:30 am worship will continue virtually until such time that Council feels it is appropriate to return, but please note that while our doors are physically closed we cannot be separated from the presence of the love of God in Christ Jesus.

Should you have any questions or concerns, I am glad to speak with you at any time.

Peace

Vicar Phil

Email: pastor@saintpaulslutheranchurch.org

Cell phone: 202-497-0584

Upcoming Events

- August 23rd** — 8:30am Modified Outside Service (Weather Permitting)
- September 10th** — "Gathered at the Table" returns, Facebook Live @ Noon with a new Faith Formation Series
- September 13th** — Church Picnic (on the Church Lawn) with a God's Work, Our Hands Project
- September 27th** — Vicar Phil's Ordination and Installation (Info and invitation will be available throughout the month)

July 20, 2020

Dear Fellow Congregants:

At our monthly meeting on July 14, your Council Leadership adopted a document that will guide St. Paul's on the steps needed to return to in-person worship. Tasked with this challenge, the Worship and Arts Committee has been working diligently to discern the method and means by which we will return to in-person worship. It is their recommended document that your Council adopted and approved. A PowerPoint document has been created detailing the specifics that need to be accomplished, including the purchase of supplies, procedures for cleaning, and the ways we as parishioners will have to attend worship. This document was created utilizing DE/MD Synod, CDC, State, and Federal guidelines as the foundation for our plan. This fifty-five-page presentation covers a whole host of information that is the St. Paul's reopening plan. A two-page document will highlight the necessary procedures for re-entry into the sanctuary which will be available in the Weekly Reminder and mailed to those who do not have internet connectivity. The PowerPoint presentation will be available upon request.

Worship will be quite different from before as there will be no singing, no communion, and no physical contact along with distanced seating for the foreseeable future. **At this point, Council has not determined a particular date on which in-person worship will occur in the sanctuary.** However, we will be making an outdoor service available beginning on August 23, 2020 at 8:30am. This worship will include the reading of the lessons, Gospel, intercessory prayers, and a sermon. Weather will be a large factor in the execution of this service, and in the case of inclement weather, the service will not occur. There will be no printed materials distributed and if you feel you need a chair, umbrella, or other implements, you will have to bring them yourself.

It is anticipated that Council and the Worship and Arts Committee will complete a dry run of these new procedures before we re-enter the sanctuary. We will also produce a video to be shared with you so that there will be no surprises once you arrive for worship. Please note below some of the new normal changes you will see:

- ✦ Please do not group closely together outside the church door; physical distancing is required during entry and exits
- ✦ Entry and exit from the church will be through the side-door (handicapped entrance) only
- ✦ Face masks are always required inside the building for all worshippers age 3 years and above
- ✦ Temperature checks will be completed prior to entry to the building/ If you show a temperature of 100 degrees or above you will need to go home

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- ✦ Physical distancing of at least 6 feet is required (signage and floor markings will help you visualize the spaces) outside and inside the building
- ✦ Immediate family groups may sit together, with the appropriate distancing between other persons or groups
- ✦ You will check in with an usher who will record your attendance and make sure we have up to date contact information for you
- ✦ Please use the hand sanitizer station prior to moving further into the Nave.
- ✦ An usher will direct you to the appropriate available seating.
- ✦ There will be no live singing, no hymnals, or other materials in the pews
- ✦ If you chose to do so, you may quietly speak the liturgical responses and prayers
- ✦ Passing of the Peace will be “touchless”
- ✦ There will be no childcare provided
- ✦ There will be no access to any part of the church other than the nave, entry hall, and restrooms
- ✦ Only 1 person at a time per restroom, wash hands prior to leaving the restroom
- ✦ Worship materials will be projected onto a screen or downloaded to your personal device; paper materials will not be provided. Additionally, you can print materials from the email or website and bring if you wish
- ✦ An offering plate will not be passed; however, a plate will be available at the entry/exit point for your convenience; Electronic Offerings are encouraged at <https://saintpaulslutheranchurch.org> GIVE button
- ✦ If you have a fever, are not feeling well, or if you have been exposed to COVID19, or if you are not yet comfortable gathering in person, please stay home and join us in worship with our online offerings.
- ✦ *If you worship in person with us and develop COVID19, please notify us within 24hours. The church will notify all who gathered at that time of the potential risk exposure. All your information will be kept confidential*

Please know that all these steps have been prayerfully considered. Our thoughts and prayers are always mindful of our entire church family and the greater good.

As a reminder, no date has been set for re-entry into the sanctuary

Sincerely,

Council, St. Paul's Lutheran Church
301-845-4600