

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Newsletter

November 2020

From the Pastor's Pen...



Dear St. Paul's faith family,

Grace Mercy and Peace be unto you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! I spent a part of my childhood on my Father's grain farm in the highlands of Ethiopia. Each June, my family planted cereals like wheat, barley, beans, and corn. Through the long winter, we patiently took care of the growing plants by pulling out weeds, protecting it from animals, and trusting the Lord will give rain and sunlight. We watch as the plants sprouted, and then grew strong and tall. The crops grow through the rain, cold, sunshine, and wind. The result was a joyful harvest. However, the harvest was not possible without the growth accomplished during the long hard months of winter. After the long waiting, in October and November, Harvest will be ready.

So, it is with our spiritual life. James 5:7-12 tells us that our Christian life is full of suffering. We might face persecution due to our faith in Jesus Christ. We might be affected by the pandemic. We might be oppressed by the rich and the powerful. We might also get hurt by fellow believers who have superficial faith and life. Today's epistle reading, James 5:7-11 instructs us, Christians how to live in this world that torments us with suffering.

First, God calls us to patience (5:7-8). We are instructed to patiently wait for the return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (v.7-8). Patience in the basic spheres of everyday life can be a challenge. It can be difficult to wait and to be patient. It can be an even bigger challenge in the light of adversity and suffering. James' audience is facing persecution. They are being wrong and mistreated, and those who are doing it them are prospering. And what does James preach to them? Patience? James preaches patience. He teaches and encourages patience in adversity and suffering by pointing them to Christ's Second Coming. He shows us patience in trials and hardships by pointing us to the same event.

James says to be like the farmer: "Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. You also be patient." Put yourself in the farmer's shoes for just a moment. It really takes a lot of patience to be a farmer. There are many things out of a farmer's control that he has just to wait out. He has no control over the sunshine or the amount of rain that will fall. He cannot control the temperature. He cannot heavily affect growth. He

cannot prevent an enemy invasion. He cannot prevent theft or vandals or fully stop animals from grazing on his crops. He cannot even guarantee that the seeds of what he had planted will sprout! And when things are planted, he has to wait for months. There is so much out of his control! You have to wait, hope, and pray and see how things turn out! Can you imagine being a farmer without patience?

There are many times in life when we are put in the position of the farmer. There are many things out of our control. There are problems we have to be patient in and sometimes can't do anything about. We have no control over a market crash or housing drop. Friendships for some reason can fizzle. You dry yourself off after the shower and find that lump. We have no control over politics and the policies that are produced. Insurance and other rates can go up. COVID 19 could distract our life. Life can throw those random problems and more.

What we do? In these situations, we wait. We patiently endure. We remain on the Lord, look to Him, and His Coming. James urges and teaches patience in problems. He also encourages us to be patient with others. He also focuses our eyes on Jesus return. Jesus' second coming is a good thing for Christians. It means our salvation and vindication. It means the end of suffering, stress, pain, persecution, heartache, oppression and loss. It means a new heaven, a new earth, a new body, and the reunion with our departed loved ones in the Lord. Jesus' return gives us hope, comfort, and encouragement to face the day. It means that something better is coming ahead! So, "be patient. Establish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord is at hand."

Second, avoid complaining (5:9). It is natural to complain when we are persecuted and oppressed. Patience must be mixed with the harmony that results from controlled speech and behavior (v. 9). Thus, God counsels us against complaining about one another. The apostle James writes the epistle of James to the Jewish believers of the first century that were scattered to Judea, Samaria, and beyond after Stephen's death due to persecution (1:2-4; Acts 8:1). They faced discrimination due to lack of love, 2:1-13, bitterness in speech/ complaining, 3:1-12, and attitude, 3:13-4:3. And oppression by the rich, 5:1-6. In verse 9, James warned them that in spite of the abuse they have endured, they should not grumble.

In our Christian lives, we wrestle with the reality that our Lord has not returned yet. In our problems, this delay can give way to impatience in our dealings with others. James says, "Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door." Our Lord is on His way, and we keep that in mind with our interactions with others. But unfortunately, when we are stressed, scared, or uncertain of our future and circumstances, when we are in the middle of a trial, sickness, pandemic, and any hardship, we can mistreat others. Our patience can be severely diminished in these things.

We might grumble against others by blaming our current problem(s) on them! "It's their fault!" we might say. We might snap on that innocent spouse from the high emotions and energy of it. We might freak out on that friend or complain about our children. We can be tempted to make comparisons with the lots and lives of others and envy their current situation. We might see

their Facebook page and wonder, "Why can't my life be like that?" But James says, "Patience." We wait for the Judge is standing at the door.

Third, there are examples of patience for us (5:10-11). Rather than lashing out at each other, James points us to God's prophets and Job as examples of patience in suffering. They are great examples of patience. The old Testament prophets and Job waited patiently for God's promises to be fulfilled. They were scorned and beaten and even killed (1Corin. 24:20-22), but they were patient. When we read about the lives of people like Moses, like Job, like the prophets, it helps put perspective on our time, doesn't it? Did you know Moses spent 40 years tending sheep before receiving his call to be the leader of God's people? 40 years. When Job had to suffer, lose his family, lose his wealth, lose all but the breath which kept him alive, as he patiently waited on the Lord to deliver him.

Indeed, God's prophets are good examples of patiently suffering and waiting for the Lord. They endured, patiently and hopefully waiting for the judgment and the mercy of God. Similarly, Our God cares about us and what we are going through. He cared so much that He gave His One and Only Son to save and forgive us, and to show us God's mercy. He cares so much that He is with us in our sufferings and problems, just like how He was with Job and the prophets. We are blessed because, in Him, we will persevere. Dear brothers and sisters, we have a God Who is truly merciful and compassionate towards us. Therefore, wait for the return of your Lord patiently!



Prayer Requests

If at all possible, please list the need for the prayer. If the request requires long-term prayers, please indicate so and let the office know when it should be removed. Please contact Cindy in the office at info@StPaulsCrofton.com if you have any questions!

Short-Term Prayers:

Jackie Abend (recovering from surgery)

Long-Term Prayers:

Preston Arnold; John and Monica Bagley (health issues);; Phyllis Ball (health issues); Barry (family and health issues); JoAnn Breitbach (health issues); Peta Capello (health issues); Barbara Carr (health issues); Cindy Craytor (major surgery); Marianne Foreman (health issues); Graham; Sarah Hendricks (health issues); Jay (health issues); Janet Mox (health issues); Phil Myer (health issues); Erna Pleinis (recovering from a car accident); Kay Rudolph (health issues); Laurie Snook (health issues); Charles Spears (health issues); Brian Spencer (health issues); Dick Sulken (health issues); Jon Sweeney (health issues); and Tracy and Don (health issues);.

Please pray for our members and friends serving in the military: Jake Godboldte, Dylan Harris, Rachel MacCumbee, Scott MacCumbee, Brian Wolford, and their families.

November Recognition

When you arrive at church on Sundays, do you ever notice how nice our front yard looks? The grass has been cut, the twigs and leaves raked and the flower beds are pretty much weed free. It's called curb appeal. Sure, we've held many Blue Jeans Sundays over the years, but they focus on major Spring and Fall cleanup projects. So just like your own homes, someone is responsible for making sure all the outside chores regularly get done. This month we recognize Patrice and Del Jenstrom who, for the past **20 years**, have served faithfully as the caretakers of our St. Paul's home.

Thank you both for all you do and have done for St. Paul's!



Thank you to the St Paul's Volunteers for conducting the 10/10 drive to collect donations for the CCCC Baby Pantry.

As of September 2020, we have had 244 yearly client visits to the baby pantry.

Our 2020 distribution of baby product resources has impacted the quality of life of 369 children living in Anne Arundel Co.

We believe every child deserves a fair chance to succeed in life and appreciate your support which permits us to assist local families in need of a helping hand.

~God bless
Art McQuade
CCCC BP Co-Chairman

WOW! Many, many thanks to St. Paul's members & friends for the generous outpouring of support for the CCCC Food & Baby Pantry collection on Saturday, October 10th. At least 350 pounds of non-perishable foods, 400+ diapers, baby formula, \$100 in Giant grocery cards, \$650 in checks -- all to help neighbors in need!!

A BIG shout-out to the helpers - Jen Houck, Sadie Becoate, Bernice & Bob Prescott, Judy Tribby, Sandi & Bill Corwin, Marilyn Harris, & Jack Courtney. Well done, ALL!

-- 2 Thessalonians 1:3 - *We ought always to thank God for you, brothers and sisters, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love all of you have for one another is increasing.*



An invitation to help beautify the grounds!

If anyone would like to help clean out the brush growing along the northern edge of the property between the picnic tables and 3-Some Auto Place, please feel free! The leaves can stay in there. You can put the brush in the area to the left front side of the garage where we usually put it.

Thank you!

You can text or call Patrice if you have any questions at 443-254-6765.



Poinsettias for St. Paul's Shut-Ins

As you might know, St. Paul's has a number of our members who are very senior, ill, or unable to be out of their homes. The Outreach and Fellowship Teams and helpers are delivering CARE bags to these individuals once a month. In December we'll be delivering CARE bags and a poinsettia to the 15 St. Paul's households served by this ministry.

If you would care to sponsor a poinsettia for this ministry, you are welcome to pay for the plant and to dedicate it in honor or in memory of a loved one. A team member will deliver the poinsettia to a home-bound member on the second weekend of December.

A list of dedications will be published during the Christmas holidays.

Poinsettias are \$10 each. Make your check payable to St. Paul's Lutheran Church and write "Poinsettia" on your check. In addition, please email or call Penny Courtney, pennycourtney@yahoo.com, 410-969-9156, with your poinsettia dedication or if you have any questions.

Thank you for your support of this outreach ministry!!

Sermons



DON'T MISS A SERVICE!

We are blessed to have an updated and fully functioning website that provides us with the information we need to communicate. Every Sunday, we have the privilege of virtually attending church service through the website. **If you are not comfortable attending worship, please visit us online at www.StpaulsCrofton.com.**



If you wish to dedicate flowers in honor or in memory of someone, the altar guild is offering fresh cut flowers for \$10/vase. The sign up sheet is in the narthex or you can let the office know. Checks should be made out to St. Paul's with "flowers" in the notes section.



At our next book club meeting we will be discussing "*The Island of Sea Women*" by Lisa See. We will meet via Zoom on November 16th.

If you wish to join in, contact Sandi Corwin for a ZOOM invite at sacorwin1001@gmail.com.

NEWS from the WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Acolytes are once again being used in our worship services. Max Houck, Selah and Jonah Ketema are serving as acolytes. They are not only lighting and extinguishing the candles, they are also ringing the church bell before and after the service. Max Houck has trained MacKenzie Clark and she will be lighting the candles and ringing the bell soon.

The coat closet will be closed. Worshippers may lay their coats beside them or over the pew in front of them.

Thanksgiving will be celebrated during the worship service on November 22nd. There will be no evening Thanksgiving service.

Advent begins on Sunday, November 29th. There will be Wednesday evening services lasting between 30 and 40 minutes. These Wednesday services will be on December 2nd, 9th, 16th, and 23rd. Time will be announced.

Singing and non-singing Christmas Eve Services will be offered. All persons who wish to attend must register to attend and will be given an assigned seat to maximize the space. More information will follow.

On December 27th we will celebrate with Lessons and Carols.

All services will be in-person or live streamed.

Jane Felsentreger, Chair



Blessing Your Child or Grandchild

Have you taken the time to bless your child or grandchild lately?

In our busy world,
it's important to connect our kids
with God and His love for them.

Simply make the
their forehead and
“God loves you,
are a special child
Perhaps you may
“God loves you so
and so do I.”



sign of the cross on
say,
child's name. You
of God.”
want to say,
much, child's name,

Martin Luther advocated making the sign of the cross
as we rise in the morning and before we retire for the day.
Although children can be blessed anytime, these would be
good times to bless your special child.

ADVENT BY CANDLELIGHT



Ladies, it's that time of year again when we look forward to celebrating Advent together. Since we cannot physically meet this year we are working on a virtual event (if it can be done for coffee klatches and wine tasting parties, why not?). Lots more info to come, but please keep Sunday evening, November 29, open to get together.



News from the Quilters

The Quilter's are ready for the SALE. We are doing everything we can to make it safe for You and us. We have made some changes this year.

The Quilt Raffle tickets have been made since March, giving us 6 months to make it a successful event. We have had 6 weeks. The winner of this beautiful quilt should appreciate the hand work in it. If you have not taken a chance on it, please do!! Someone will win it and if you don't, you've made a donation to two worthwhile community projects.

We hope YOU the church members think of our invitation on Thursday evening 6-9 p.m. as a privilege or a treat and not a chore to come out. This invitation does not mean you can't come on Friday or Saturday. Many of our articles are one of a kind, by Sunday they are all gone and you didn't have a chance to buy them or see them.

We will still have our quilt display on the pews but no one will be sitting on them. Please honor our rules by using the Fellowship Hall door for registration and the contact sheet. A few of us will be there all three days and we look forward to seeing you.

Thank You in advance,

Dorothy



LADIES' LUNCH will be held Thursday noon November 12th by the picnic tables (weather permitting) or in the Fellowship Hall. All ladies are invited to attend and are encouraged to bring a friend. Please bring YOUR OWN LUNCH, DRINK, and MASK. We will be social distancing and wearing face masks. If needed, the bathroom in the basement will be available.

Ladies Breakfast Group



All women of the church are invited to the next breakfast gathering on Thursday, November 19th at 8:30 a.m. If weather permits we will meet by the picnic tables. If weather does not we have been given permission by the Board of Directors to meet in the Fellowship Hall. We will sign in providing contact information and I have been directed to keep these sign in sheets for three months. We will sanitize the room before and after use. We are not to use the kitchen for any reason. You must bring your breakfast complete with a drink. We will open windows for cross ventilation. Except when eating, you must wear your mask. Looking forward to seeing you for breakfast on Thursday, Be safe!

Jane Felsentreger
mjfelsentreger@outlook.com

Sharing Thanksgiving Blessings

This year St. Paul's will provide Thanksgiving food baskets for 3 families with children and 2 senior households. Look for a sign-up sheet set up on an easel outside the front church doors beginning on November 1st.

Take a tag or several and bring back your tagged items to church before/on November 15th. Food will be distributed to families on November 21st here at church. Much will be different around our Thanksgiving tables this year but Christ's love for us and for our neighbors remains constant.

Let us demonstrate love by sharing our many blessings!! Questions? Call Penny Courtney at 410-969-9156



TOY DRIVE

NOVEMBER 29th -- That's the day we'll gather toys for the Lutheran Mission Society's "Miracle of Christmas" toy drive. The Empty Nesters small group has taken up a toy collection from group members for many years. This year we have an opportunity as a congregation to participate in making holiday magic for kids in need. If you wish to participate, on November 29th please bring a new, unwrapped toy for any age child, infant to 18 years old. We'll gather the toys prior to our worship service.

Pastor Teklu will bless our donations to be part of a cheery holiday for needy youngsters served by the Lutheran Mission Society. Thank you for helping!!! Questions? Call Penny - 410-969-9156.



Virtual Communion

We have made a virtual communion video available for those members who Live stream from home. Please login to the members-only section on our website on Sunday to access the virtual communion link. Please contact Patrice Jenstrom at web@stpaulscrofton.com or call at 443-254-6765 if you do not have the password. This will be available every week for members.

Here are the steps to access:

1. go to www.stpaulscrofton.com on Sunday
2. log in to Member tab (get the password from Patrice if you do not have it)
3. go to view "Holy Communion" video

The Service will last around 20 to 30 minutes. You will need to have available the following:

1. Wine or grape juice in a small glass or cup for each person
2. A small piece of bread
3. A willing spirit and faithful heart

The Order of Service is from the LCMS Pastoral Care Companion.

Save Your Pull Tabs for Ronald McDonald House

The aluminum pull tab project that supports Ronald McDonald House is still alive and active. Please continue to save them and bring or drop off at church when you can.

Judy Parker and the Ronald McDonald House thanks you!

Come join "Music in the Parking Lot" – Weather Permitting outside or in the fellowship hall if not. This ensemble will play arrangements of hymns, spirituals, and other songs.

Our next rehearsals are on Friday, November 13th and November 20th from 6-7:30 PM.



Are you aware that St. Paul's offers three ways for online giving?

Setting up your profile and payment methods is simple, follow these easy steps.

1. On our website, click the donate button- The menu button on the right on the top menu or the "donate now" button at the bottom of the Home Page will take you to the Church Planning Center Giving page. Set up your payment methods one time, and set up your recurring donations here.
2. Download and give via the church center app for mobile- Set up your profile and link to St. Paul's of Gambrills and Crofton. Enter your payment method(s) one time, then you can donate at any time easily and quickly. You can also set up recurring donations and pay the fee.
3. Text to give- text \$ amount to 84321- You still need to set up your payment methods.

Are you aware that St. Paul's is charged fees for online giving?

Please cover the fee!

If you want the church to receive your full donation, you may want to pay the fee. Once you input the amount of your donation and payment method, the processing fee will be calculated and you can click on the box to add it. This would save our church money in fees, and the amount covered by the donor is usually small relative to the size of their donation.

Example: If the donor wants to contribute \$100.00 through their checking account, you can cover the (ACH) fee of 25 cents. The year-end tax statement will show that you gave \$100.25 to the church. The church pays the 25 cents for the processing fee, receiving \$100.00.

Credit card fees are slightly higher as it is based on a percentage of the amount donated plus a 30 cent fee.

If you have any additional questions, please contact Charlotte Angeli at treasurer@StPaulsCrofton.com.

Happy
Thanksgiving

