



“ST. PAUL’S IS A FAMILY OF BELIEVERS IN THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST, COMMITTED TO THE FULFILLMENT OF THE WORD OF GOD”

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Visit us at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Mountain Top, PA and keep in touch with upcoming events.

**WELCOME TO OUR
NEWEST RECONCILING IN
CHRIST (RIC) PARTNER:**



St. Paul’s Lutheran Church

(Mountain Top, PA)

Sunday Service Hours

9:00 & 11:00 AM

Sunday School

10 AM



ADVENT SERVICES

Each Wednesday during December we will be offering Advent services at 11:00 a.m. In the midst of this busy season, it provides a time to pause, reflect and center yourself on the true meaning of the season. With all the activities surrounding this time of year, we need to break and focus on our relationship with God. Everyone is welcome!

Christmas Eve Services: This year Christmas Eve services are scheduled for 7:00p.m. and 10:00 p.m. on December 24th. Pastor will be conducting a 5:00 p.m. service at St. Mark's, Pond Hill if that time frame works better for your schedule.

Pastor's Notes

Happy New Year! The church calendar is slightly off kilter when it comes to the recognized calendar year. Christ the King Sunday celebrates the full authority of Christ as King and Lord of the universe. The liturgical year begins with Advent, which is the season of awaiting the coming of Christ. Observing Christ, the King Sunday at the end of the liturgical year celebrates and emphasizes the Kingship of Christ. Many Christians don't know the history of the title "Christ the King." The feast is actually a relatively new addition to the liturgical calendar. However, referring to Christ as "King" is not new.

There are countless passages throughout the New Testament where Jesus is referring to as "King." Some of these include Matthew 27:11 which says, "Now Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus said, 'You have said so.'" Another passage is First Timothy 1:17 which says, "To the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen." Revelation 19:6 also says, "On his robe and on his thigh he has a name inscribed King of

kings and Lord of lords.” From these passages, we see that “King” was one of the earliest titles given to Jesus Christ.

We know from Scripture that Jesus is the way and as a spiritual King, He provides direction to His Kingdom on earth and in heaven. John 14:16 says, “Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father, except through Me.” It’s important that we recognize His authority so that we can determine our own spiritual direction. We know that when we make Jesus the focus of our lives, we have direction. He navigates our life. When we are lost spiritually, we have no idea where we’re going. Remember, Jesus is not “a way” but “the way”. Jesus is not just “a king” but “the King.” Our call as Christians is to follow and honor His rule.

Advent begins the new church year. It is a season of anticipation: a season of hope and waiting. It is a time of preparation for the coming of Jesus Christ. Just as Advent moves us toward the remembrance of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem in the first century, it also reminds us that we need to be prepared for Christ’s coming again.

A BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

Sunday, December 22nd at 6:00 p.m.

The idea behind the Blue Christmas service is to create space for the acknowledgment of the heaviness often carried during this season, as well as offering the hope that Jesus gives. Our society has become one of masking emotions that are sometimes considered negative.

The Bible clearly acknowledges, celebrates, and makes space for pain, struggle, hardship, and tears -- and so should we. In fact, science, too, is catching up to the Bible as recent studies confirm that the “claim-your-happiness” pop psychology isn’t healthy for us physically, socially, or spiritually -- and that putting on a smile without making space for the tough stuff of life actually leads to more (*and deeper*) unhappiness. This Blue service is a beautiful way to make space during the Advent season for those suffering any kind of loss -- whether the loss of a person, a dream, finances, stability, health, or more. This service is open to all members of our community. Please feel free to extend the invitation to those you know who may find this service beneficial and healing.



Once again Pastor has prepared Advent devotions. If you would like them emailed to you directly, or printed, there is a sign up in the narthex. They can be read on Pastor's personal & St. Paul's Facebook pages. Please feel free to share them on your own page too! They will begin on Sunday, December 1 and will be posted through Epiphany (January 6th). You are welcome to share these via email or copy to your Facebook page. A simple way of pausing each day to remember what the season is all about.



Our Christmas Tree Trimming will take place on Sunday, December 1st after our 11 AM service! We hope you can stay and help beautify our church for the Christmas Season! Don't worry.... for all your hard work we'll make sure you're fed!

***CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

PART 1

Please mark Sunday, December 8th on the calendar. We will hold Part 1 of our congregational meeting between services for the sole purpose of electing new members to church council and approving the budget. No other business is to be discussed at this time as stipulated by the constitution. Please plan on attending, beginning at 10:15 a.m. between services.



ST. PAUL'S CHRISTMAS DINNER

On Sunday, December 8th at 5:00 p.m., you and your family are invited to join us for "A Christmas Dinner". Meats and drinks will be provided and we are asking you to bring along a covered dish.

There is a signup sheet in the narthex.

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING OUR DINNER...

We would like to extend an invitation to all our members, friends and family of the congregation to come celebrate the

“Hanging of the Greens” service at 7:00 pm.

The Hanging of the Greens Service will take you on a journey of what the Holy Season of Advent means and how we prepare ourselves for Christ’s arrival. There will be special music, readings on the significance of the decorations used throughout this season. This service will give us a sense of what we may be missing throughout the holiday season. We as Americans with our hectic lives get very caught up in working, cooking, baking, shopping, etc. Please come and enjoy this special event and find ways to put Christ back in Christmas.



Not only is special music and story a part of this event, but we are looking for our young people to participate in the service as well. Please let Pastor know if you will be attending.



ANGEL TREE-Catholic Social Services is asking that we help make Christmas a little brighter for families in need. The cards with the children's wishes will be available on narthex table. Gifts should be in the range of \$25.00, & should be returned with the card and UNWRAPPED in a bag. Store bags are okay. Please return by December 8th which corresponds to our Christmas Dinner & the Hanging of the Greens. Questions? call Karen Ann Kowalczyk, 570-459-0501.

OUT TO LUNCH BUNCH



**WE WILL MEET AGAIN ON
WEDNESDAY, December 11th (due to Christmas)**

PLEASE LET PASTOR KNOW IF YOU PLAN ON ATTENDING. WE WILL MEET AT CHURCH TO CARPOOL @ 11:45 A.M. YOU ARE MORE THAN WELCOME TO BRING A FRIEND. ALWAYS A GOOD TIME!



Paint Party/Luncheon & Cookie Exchange

December 14th at 11:30 A.M.

The cost will be \$50

**We will paint then have lunch paint some
more then enjoy our cookie exchange!**

**Please make sure if you plan on coming, you
bring enough cookies for at least 15 people
to exchange with!**

Signup sheet is in the narthex!

***Picture below is the painting for that day!**





It's that time of year for Christmas Eve poinsettia's! Poinsettias are available in red, white, and pink. The cost is \$8.00 per plant. Orders are due by Sunday, December 15th. Let's beautify the sanctuary this Christmas Eve with these lovely blooms! *Please note if putting your order in an envelope, please label the outside of the envelope with "poinsettia order" along with your name. Place order in secretary mailbox slot in office door. Thank you!

Winter Coat/ Hat/ Gloves Drive

We will be collecting winter coats, hats, & gloves for the children of the Hazleton Head Start.

New and gently used coats, hats, and gloves will be accepted now through December 15, 2024.

We are asking specifically for sizes 3T up to a children's size 7/8. Both girl and boy styles needed. If you are donating a gently used item, please ensure that it is washed prior to donation. A donation box will be available in the Narthex. Any questions please contact TJ Scott 570-855-5813.

Thank you!

***OUR NOVEMBER CRAFT FAIR**

raised over \$700! Thanks to everyone who helped bake for this event!

***2024 Feed A Friend**

Once again we would like to thank all those who made the Feed a Friend project a great success!!! We appreciate the work and dedication of the Scott family who continue to coordinate the efforts of this massive event.

Pastor's Discretionary Fund

Last year Church Council implemented a Discretionary Fund which is at Pastor's disposal. This allows us to help individuals in distress, whether it be a short term loan to a member or to assist someone who shows up at our door looking for gas/lodging. This fund is separate from the General account. If you would like to make a donation specifically for that purpose, please make your envelope accordingly.

Meals for the Homeless

Last year we agreed to work with St. John's, St. John's and provide meals for the homeless 6 months out of the year. We cover October thru March. Our list is full! Thanks to all who volunteered to help!

Mission Opportunities

THE WORK IS JUST BEGUN...
THE OPPORTUNITIES ARE THERE...

I have recently announced an opportunity for folks to travel this coming spring to visit the Lobau/ Zittau region of Germany. Usually the group is intergenerational, consisting of 12-16 participants, lasting 10-12 days. In the past we have visited places such as Berlin, Dresden, Prague, Krakow, Leipzig, and Auchwitz. In June 2025, we have been invited to participate in a joint venture to Argentina with members from the Nebraska and Saskatchewan Synods. It

is an opportunity to visit Argentina and learn about its people and its ministries. This too is designed to be an intergenerational trip.

If you are interested in learning more about either of these trips, contact Pastor Kaufman for more information.



WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA!

We have wreath sponsorship order forms if you would like to be involved in this program! Forms are in narthex with more details.

Pastor will deliver wreaths to St. Paul's on Saturday December 14th after 2:00p.m.

See pastor for more details!



***PLEASE REMEMBER! ***

In case of inclement weather, please do not hesitate to contact Pastor Kaufman directly (570-881-2371) on a Sunday morning and use caution should you head to service. We will also post updates should we cancel the 1st service. As the day progresses and the roads are cleared Pastor is willing to hold an evening service at 5:00 p.m. Any updates will be posted on Facebook.

THE ANNUAL KAUFMAN OPEN HOUSE



Saturday, January 4th beginning at 2:00p.m.

Every year the Kaufman's like to welcome you all into our home for a holiday celebration! Come enjoy the trees, check out the nativities, help yourself to some food and drink and enjoy the fellowship of

our family and friends as we gather to enjoy one another's company.

**GINGERBREAD HOUSES AND
CHRISTMAS PARTY**

Looking to bring our young people together for some fun and frivolity on

Sunday the 15th at 3:00 p.m. We'll work on gingerbread houses and play a few games and enjoy some pizza...

let us know if you'll be joining us!

Also looking at the possibility of heading down to Philadelphia after Christmas to take in the sights.....if you're interested let me know your availability! Lots to see and do in the city including the light show at the Philadelphia Zoo!



12/1	none
12/8	Michele Kessler Stewart's-chancel
12/15	none
12/22	Lois Scott
12/29	The Michel's

Flowers can be ordered if there are openings on the Flower Chart. The cost is \$40. *Color preferences may not be honored. \$5 will be added for specific arrangements and \$10 will be

added for blue arrangements. *If you have a specific Sunday you're interested in, call the church & leave a message for Secretary, or email info@stpaulsmttop.com

***Check it out! Kelly will be posting the new flower chart for 2025 next week!**

CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS NOV. 2024

*** The Finance Committee has approved the 2025 Church budget. It will be presented to the congregation for approval at the December 8th Congregational Meeting.**

*** The bullnose trim on the altar steps should be installed by December 1st.**

*** The church windows have been cleaned.**

***The Social media committee will be updating the St. Paul's Pamphlet.**

*** The Arts and Craft Show profit was \$733.
Thank you to all who participated.**

***Pastor Kaufman is delivering the items collected for the Carolinas, to the Synod.**

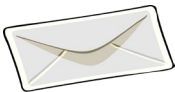
*** We are looking for two candlestick holders to retire the two weary ones in front of the altar.**

***We are actively fundraising to repair the church steps and side entrances. The goal is Spring 2025. If you wish to donate ideas, time or funds for this project, please see Pastor or any member of Council.**

***We need volunteers to cover the March Divine Providence Meals. The signup sheet is in the Narthex.**

The next Church Council Meeting is Sunday, December 15th @ 6:30PM. All members of the congregation are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Respectfully submitted, Liz Snyder



PLEASE WRITE YOUR NAMES ON THE ENVELOPES AS WE HAVE CHANGED NUMBERS AND HAVE A NEW PROCESS. THE NAMES ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THE ENVELOPE NOW.

Update

**PLEASE PUT ALL SECRETARY NOTES, CARDS ETC
IN THE OFFICE DOOR SLOT MOVING FORWARD.**

THANK YOU!



**WANT TO SUPPORT ST. PAUL'S? DO YOU
REGULARLY SHOP AT WEIS MARKETS?**

CONSIDER PURCHASING A WEIS GIFT CARD IN
\$100, \$50 OR \$25 INCREMENTS TO PURCHASE
YOUR GROCERIES AT A LATER DATE. THESE ARE
GREAT HOLIDAY GIFT IDEAS AS WELL!

***MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO ST. PAUL'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH.**



**We are collecting coupons
again for the Legion auxiliary of Weatherly!**
**Please bring in coupons and put them in
Marjorie Lou Anthony's mailbox.**



Stamps for the Wounded

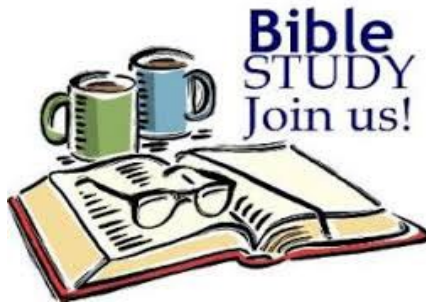
Stamps for the wounded is a service organization dedicated to providing comfort & stimulating activity to US Veterans through stamp collecting. There will be a stamp collection box in the narthex, where donated used postage stamps from your mail will be collected. Any other Postal collections or memorabilia can also be donated.

GOD'S WORK, OUR HANDS TREE

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

In the narthex stands the God's Hands, Our Work tree. Displayed are hands that indicate ways you may be able to support St. Paul's ministries. \$10 here; \$20 there can go a long way when added all together.

Remove a hand and slip the amount requested in an envelope or if you prefer pick up the necessary item at the store...whatever works for you. We greatly appreciate your support!



Come Join us on Thursday afternoons beginning at 1:00 p.m.!

Bible Trivia: How well do you know your bible?

(Read Acts 4:22-37)

1. How old was the crippled man that Peter and John healed?
2. After the believers prayed in Acts 4, what happened to the place where they were praying?
3. What other name was Joseph a Levite from Cyprus known by in Acts 4?
4. What did his other name mean?
5. What did he sell in order to bring the money to the Apostles?

(Answers are on the last page of the Newsletter)



Get your November Newsletter submissions into Kelly by December 20th! You can leave your information in her mailbox, call her at the office or email her at:

info@stpaulsmttop.com



We are attempting to update the current church directory. Please fill out a form in the narthex if you haven't done so to update your contact information. Copies will be made available in the near future!

WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN ST. PAUL'S? Please arrange a meeting with Pr. Kaufman to discuss membership. Pastor is currently arranging appointments with various folks.



EVERY PENNY COUNTS

Bring in that loose change and make a difference when it comes to World Hunger. It is amazing how that loose change on the library table or in the cup holder inside the car can add up when we put it all together. Drop it into the jug in office!



ALUMINUM CANS

Keep those cans coming! Please remember to deposit your aluminum cans in the bin behind the church. Monies collected from the sale go directly to where it's needed in our church! We are in need of preparing cans to take them to recycling. Let Pastor know if you are able to assist!



YARN SPINNERS

We are currently working on lap robes for St. Luke's Marjorie Lou Anthony will take them over to St. Luke's for distribution. We will continue to work on the prayer shawls and baptismal blankets for Pastor.



**Feeding the
Community**

FOOD BANK

The Mountain Top Food Bank continues to distribute food to clients every Friday using safe distance practices. If you would like to drop off donations at the church, please do so on Fridays 9am-noon. Donations are welcome & appreciated. **Items they currently need are:**

Peanut Butter, jelly, cereal, ketchup, dry soup, pudding, Jell-O mixes, popcorn, pork & beans, canned tomatoes, canned soup, mustard, mayonnaise, tuna, macaroni & cheese, pasta (ex. Spaghetti), peas, canned pasta, and noodles.

SICK OR IN THE HOSPITAL?

WOULD YOU LIKE A VISIT FROM PASTOR?

If you are in the hospital, please let us know. We care about you, and we would like to pray for you. If you would like Pastor to make a visit for any particular reason, please contact Pastor directly or leave a message with the church secretary and Pastor will contact you to schedule a time.

YOU ARE IMPORTANT TO US, but we cannot address what we don't know.

PRAYERS REQUESTED FOR: Bob Anthony Jr., Marjorie Lou Anthony, Lynn Barelski, Austin Bowman, Greg Brosh, Dawn M. Brown, Lester Day, Florence Drum, Tom Fenstermacher, Lena Fenton, Bob Flynn, Bernice Ganski, Lee Hallock, Leslie Hollock, Ted Hollock, Pat Hoovler, Craig Jacobs, Kyle Johns, Wayne Jones, Florence Catherine Kojeszewski, Matthew Kostelec, Todd & Daphne Kretz, Diane Lefebvre, Kathy Lines, Amy Maher, Dale Major, Jon Martineau, Dolores Marzocco, Wayne Mast, Ruth & Fred Mayshock, Mary Alice McCloskey, Jackie McDermott, Mason Medvick, Shari Meister,

Sandy Morales, Cheryl Myers, Dennis Overstreet, Kelly Palmer, Mary Lou Perez, Jerry Post, Regan Richmond, Andrew Richner, Mark Reeves, Steven Reeves, Michele Reed, Steven Robertson, Ellen Robinson, Patricia & Ron Royek, Cathy Ruitter, Elliana Scott, Lois Scott, Carl Schultz, Nancy Schwartz, Joe Seymour, Robert F. Shultz, Amanda Skalla, Jarrod Smith, Steven Spohr, Ted Stemrich, Matthew Walker, Zack Weber, Tanyia Reeves-Wendel, Karen Wise, Ethan Woods, Audrey Wysowski

IN ADDITION TO THOSE HAVING HEALTH PROBLEMS WE ASK THAT YOU PRAY FOR ALL THE MEN, & WOMEN SERVING IN THE ARMED FORCES: Sam Rudolf, Casey Balogh, Christian Yurkanin, Luke Fleck, Wayne Kaufman, Kevin & Faith Ann Bigelow, Nicholas Keenan, Devin Fairchild, Raquel Mateo



December Birthday's

Cara Ann Henahan	1 st
Sue Hoops	4 th
Helen Davis	5 th
Dave Dewald	5 th
Nathan Pinko	6 th
Timothy Renninger	7 th
Amy Seroska	9 th
Jacob Garinger	11 th

Lydia Cain	11 th
Dylan Gensil	12 th
Gerri Herron	13 th
John O'Bryne	13 th
Jeanna Ann Gaffney	15 th
Sarah Burke	16 th
Franklin Hauze	16 th
Michelle Dattisman	17 th
Lauren Falcheck	17 th
Donna Brown	20 th
Lilly Mae Repsher	20 th
Russell Kaufman	20 th
Lucas Schoch	20 th
Brianna Weiss	21 st
June Horinko Wunderlich	22 nd
Jerry Post	23 rd
Tom Snyder	24 th
Nicole Gusditis	25 th
Todd Kern	25 th
Dennis Eddy, Jr.	26 th
Heather Davies	26 th
Lauren Ford	28 th
Donna Fenstermacher	30 th
Marissa Lines	30 th
Romayne Lochner	30 th
Leigh Michel	30 th
Levi Schuler	31 st

December Anniversaries

Leigh & Russ Michel	22nd/'90
Virginia & Paul Weaver	24 th
Michele & Wayne Kaufman	31st/'83

ANSWERS TO BIBLE TRIVIA:

- 1. Over 40 years old**
- 2. It was shaken**
- 3. Barnanbas**
- 4. Son of Encouragement**
- 5. A field**