

St. Paul Partners

A Publication of
St. Paul Lutheran Church

JANUARY 2021

volume 34 · number 7

Sponsored by Barbara Sloop to the glory of God and in hopes of a better year in 2021

A New Sound for a New Year

Dear St. Paul Family,

One of our accomplishments from 2020 was being able to install a new sound system in the sanctuary. The old system had served its purpose but was beginning to age and wear out. Before the pandemic started, there were more and more complaints of folks not being able to hear the service very clearly. The old system was checked by professionals and the diagnosis was that the system was just wearing out. We got a quote and specifications on what was needed in a new system and what the cost would be.

As a congregation there was a very faithful response and we collected what was needed to not only make deposits but to fully pay for the new system. This past fall, the installation process began which had to be done in stages. As of this writing we now have the new system in place and are training people to properly use it. We are continuing to work out the kinks as it is a learning curve for all of us. Your patience and understanding is appreciated as we make adjustments to fine tuning the sound quality in the sanctuary and the sound as well as the quality of our livestream but all in all folks are saying the sound is much better.

To date, we have a new sound system, new speakers, new cordless mics and a camera with the ability to record and livestream the services to our website and Facebook page. New microphones for the lectern and pulpit are currently on order and are scheduled to be installed the second week of this month. This should complete the process and at some point after that we will have a dedication ceremony for the new system asking for God's blessings as we use this to enhance the quality of our worship and in

Inside This Issue

Pastor's Article.....	1
Executive Team	2
Birthdays & Anniversaries.....	3
Announcements.....	4
Council Notes	5
WELCA	6
What about Epiphany	7
Livestream	8

thanksgiving for the faithful response from the church family. Some donations were given in memory or honor of someone and that will be acknowledged as well. We are also blessed in that we have a little bit of a surplus in what we now call our Technology Fund and this can be used for any future needs that may arise with the sound system or other pieces of 21st century technology around the church.

It is a blessing to have this as the pandemic continues to rage on in our county. As many are remaining hunkered down and limiting social connecting as much as possible, being able to livestream, post recorded services and offer things like phone tree messages, lets us take advantage of technology to the fullest to continue outreach with the gospel message.

As we have new hopes for our New Year, we also have the new sounds of our modern technology. Thanks be to God! Be good to yourself and be Christ like to each other. Together we are partners in ministry as we put our mission into practice to *Witness, Welcome, Worship* and *Work* in the name of our Lord.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Ralph

EXECUTIVE TEAM ELECTED: At the December Council meeting the following were elected as the Executive Team for the year 2021:

- Pastor Ralph Kraft – Council President
- Jonathan Jarrett – Council Vice-President
- Gail Blackburn – Council Secretary
- Marty Coulter – Congregation Treasurer

We thank these individuals for saying “yes” to the Holy Spirit’s call to serve in this way.



Church Council will meet Sunday January 10th in the Fellowship Hall immediately after worship. Please bring your Council packet with you which you should receive as email the Wednesday beforehand.

2021 OFFERING ENVELOPES: Offering envelopes are now in the narthex. Please pick yours up at your earliest convenience. If you would like yours mailed to you or would like to make an appointment to pick up please contact *Morgan* or *Pastor Ralph*

JANUARY

Birthdays

January 2	Barbara Reed
January 4	Karina Coulter
January 5	Roger Frye
January 8	Margaret Ikerd
January 10	Michelle Davis Alice Fry
January 13	Melvin Coulter
January 15	Marty Coulter
January 19	Linda Herman
January 30	Hugh Lindler
January 31	Dylan Lail

JANUARY

Anniversaries

January 11	Keith & Kathy Frye
January 17	Jonathan & River Jarrett

Did We Miss Your Birthday or Anniversary?

If so, please accept our apologies!
Let us know so we can make it right by calling
(828) 464-3853 or email
morgan@stpaulstartown.org

Dear St. Paul Family,

We thank you so much for the generous love offering you gave us at Christmas along with other gifts, cards, prayers and well wishes. We are truly blessed and have been uplifted by your kindness and support. We appreciate this partnership in ministry we share with you. May God richly bless you with good health, safety, joy and peace in 2021.

Love, *Pastor Ralph & Mary Kraft*

Dear St. Paul Congregation,

Thank you for remembering me in your generous gifts of support this year. You all mean so much to me and my family. May you be blessed abundantly in 2021.

All the Best, *Morgan Lane*



IN OUR
Thoughts and Prayers

Our Christian sympathy and hope in the resurrection is extended to Alice Fry upon the unexpected death of her son, Frank, last month.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Any who can stay after worship on Sunday January 3rd would be appreciated to take down and put away the candelabras and other Christmas decorations. Also if you can meet sometime that week to take down the Chrismon tree please speak to either David Miller or Pastor Ralph.

WHAT A BLOOMING OPPORTUNITY!

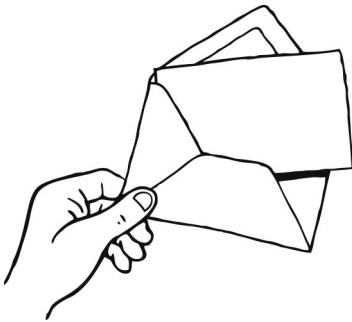
The 2021 sign-up sheet for sponsoring Sanctuary flowers or peace lilies has been posted in the Hallway outside the Church Office. Also the sign-up sheet for sponsoring the 2021 Newsletters is also posted. Please prayerfully consider sharing your treasure in honor or memory of a special person.



Altar Flowers

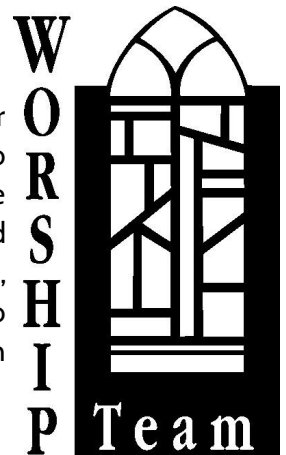
SEND A SMILE

As many of us attend Worship in person, we notice those who are not sitting in front or in back of us. Understandably, some of our members are not ready to attend in person. Hopefully, they are participating via computer. While bulletins are being sent weekly by WELCA to those who are with us in spirit, it's not quite the same. If you notice your "pew partners" are not present, why not send them a cheery note, letting them know we are missing them and keeping them in our thoughts and prayers. Those folded pieces of cardboard are guaranteed to bring a smile to the recipient. What a great way to share 55 cents of your treasure!!



2021 Worship Assistants

While the finishing touches are being compiled for the 2021 based on your submitted Time and Talent worksheets, we still may need some volunteers to help with our Worship experience. Please let Pastor Ralph or Morgan Lane know if you can serve as a Crucifer, Acolyte, Usher or help with Altar Guild duties. As soon as the plan is completed it will be published. And, don't forget, if you are not able to serve on a particular day, it is your responsibility to arrange for a substitute. The sharing of your time and talent is so much appreciated!



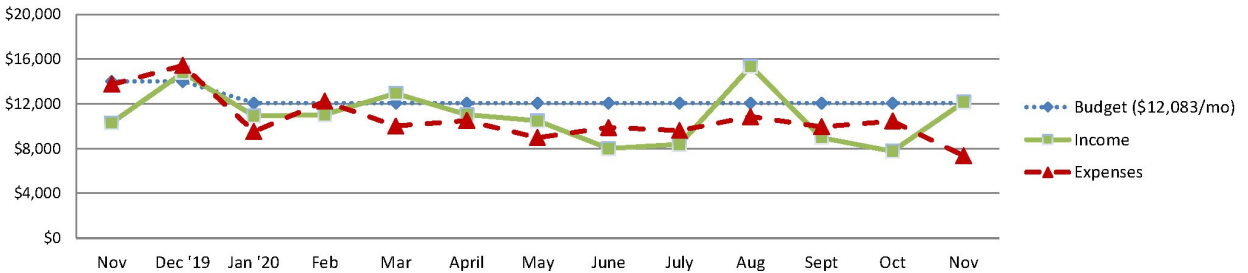


Council Notes

The St. Paul Church Council met in person on Sunday, December 13, 2020 at 11:12am. Highlights from the meeting include:

- 2 new wireless microphones have been installed. Choir speakers should be installed sometime in early 2021.
- Executive Council elected: Pastor Ralph, President - Jonathan Jarrett, Vice President - Marty Coulter, Treasurer - Gail Blackburn, Secretary
- New computer has been purchased to replace 8 year old computer in church office.
- Installation of new council members will be January 10, 2021
- Church council meetings will continue to be held on the 2nd Sunday of the month following worship.

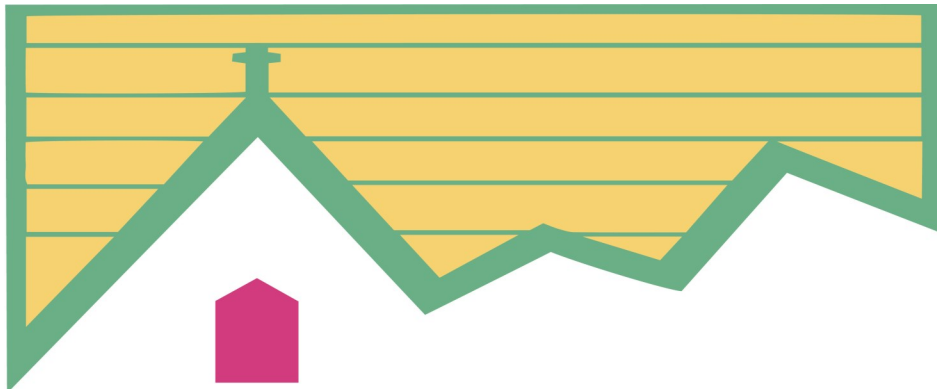
General Acct - St. Paul Operations
(rolling 12 months)



	Beginning Balance	Income	Expenses	Ending Balance
General Fund	11,061.72	12,141.79	7,379.49	15,824.02
Dedicated Fund	37,331.47	1,222.48	4,816.89	33,737.06
Current W/H Tax Payable	-6,978.94	0.00	88.99	-7,067.93
Total General Fund	41,414.25			42,493.15

Fund Balance
 Gift & Memorial Fund: **\$10,733.31**
 Mission Campus CD: **\$151,252.78**

NOTE:





A WELCA WELCOME!

What a great way to start the New Year!! Women of St. Paul, join your sisters in Christ at our first one hour meeting of 2021 as we celebrate 104 years of serving our Lord and Church on Tuesday, January 11, 2021, at 6:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall. Of course, mask usage and social distancing will be observed. But we can still see smiling eyes and hear

both laughter and prayer. Let's get together and determine how we can help one another and serve our Church and community!!

CROSSHAY

Oops! That's not spelled correctly. But, you know what, the "Crochet Cronies" aren't too fussy about spelling or dropped stitches or unintended pattern changes as we spend time together sharing our love of the Lord and our interest in varieties of needlework. We have quite a store of donated yarn and would love to have you join us (safely) in the Conference Room from 9-11 AM this month on January 11th and January 25th. Chase away the winter blahs with your fellow smiling creators – guaranteed to keep you in "stitches" (yep! A bad pun!)



Tithes and Offerings

Thank you for your continued giving during this most uncertain time. Please If you'd like to sign up for electronic giving, please contact the church office or visit our website www.stpaulstartown.org where you can find a donate button at the bottom of the home page. Offerings can also be mailed to the church office at 3761 Startown Rd., Newton, NC 28658. Offerings can also be dropped off and placed in the black drop box outside the building next to the metal stairs. Thank you again for your continued financial support of our church.



What About Epiphany?!

by Rev. Greg Alms

Don't miss the season of Epiphany! Epiphany is season of light but is squeezed between Christmas and Lent. The message of this season ought to shine brightly for it teaches an important topic: the mission of the church. It progresses from bright star guiding the Magi to the shining dove at the Baptism of Jesus to the glory of the Transfiguration. The structure of the season proclaims the mission of God's people.

The story of the Magi is that of distant people coming to Christ. The light draws the wise men from far off to worship Him. The Church calls people who are isolated from God to come. But the invitation is not to some idea or theory but to "God in man made manifest" (*ELW 310*). The Church's mission is to call sinners to communion with the life-giving flesh of Christ.

The first Sunday after the Epiphany takes us to the waters of the Jordan. There John baptized Jesus, who numbers Himself among sinners. The bright dove, the Holy Spirit, points out Christ in the water. Outreach to the world and into the Church points to the same water. Those whom the mission calls to join Christ and His Church are called to the light of Christ in Baptism.

The remaining Sundays of Epiphany focus on the ministry of Jesus. He is the light of the world. He preaches. He prays. He heals those afflicted by Satan. In other words, He does mission work. The Church does also. Jesus also calls us the light of the world. The mission of the Church is like Jesus' ministry: long and patient. The Church's mission is not to simply bring in as many as we can through the front door. It is to keep shining the light of Christ through His word, season after season, so that those living in darkness may continue to see the great light.

The finale of the Epiphany season is the Transfiguration. God in flesh is at the center but now not Magi but the glorified saints of old and the trembling disciples surround Christ. The light that pointed to Jesus at His Baptism now shines through Him. This is the goal of the Church's work: to bring people into God's presence for eternity. The light of Transfiguration shows us how important the Church's work really is. The mission of the Church is aimed at that divine joy.



St. Paul Lutheran Church

3761 Startown Rd

Newton, NC 28658

Phone: (828) 464-3853

www.StPaulStartown.org

STAMP
HERE

<<Address Here>>

We the people of St. Paul are called and empowered by God- To Witness through Christ; To Welcome everyone through the Holy Spirit; To Worship with joy; and To Work with God to meet the needs of our community.



Worship with us ONLINE on Facebook Live or in person!
Every Sunday at 10:00am.