

Sponsored by Marie Scronce in honor of the St. Paul Women of the ELCA

HALFWAY THERE

Dear St. Paul Family,

Often times on trips someone may say “*We are halfway there!*” This is usually said to acknowledge a milestone and I believe to give a sense of hope and encouragement to convey the fact that we have already made it this far and so surely we can make it the rest of the way.

As we now embark on the month of May it occurs to me that we are petty much at the halfway point of our church calendar year. When we consider our church seasons of Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter and Pentecost we remember that the new church year always begins with Advent and that always starts at the end of November or maybe the beginning of December, so May is about the halfway point. In one sense it is hard to believe that here in 2021 we are already halfway through our church year. I don’t say that to make us anxious or depressed that time is marching on nor am I trying to say we are somehow missing out or getting left behind – on the contrary this is a reminder that we are halfway through telling the story of Jesus and his love in 2021 and that is a tremendous witness on more than one level.

On Sunday May 23rd during worship we will acknowledge the official end of the Easter season with the extinguishing of the Christ Candle just the before the gospel is read. With the gospel reading, this will usher in the season of Pentecost where we acknowledge the sending of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the Christian Church. The season of Pentecost is the longest of the church seasons and in fact will last until the end of November when

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Advent will begin a new church calendar year. Most of the Pentecost season calls for the green paraments which reminds us of the life we have in Christ and the call to grow in our faith as the Lord's children. For Pentecost Day, the color is red reminding us of the spirit of fire of the Holy Spirit and passion for serving Jesus through the church. As a reminder, this is what we call a "wear red" Sunday and so is appropriate to wear something red to church if you desire.

As I have been meeting with Lilly Arrowood and her mother to bring Lilly's Confirmation experience to a close, we have been reviewing, amongst other things, the seasons of the church year. Within this time of instruction we are remembering the importance of why we tell the story over and over year after year. It is part of how we remain faithful until Christ comes again and it provides a guide and model for telling the story of Jesus and His love through Christmas, Jesus' baptism, his trials and temptations, Easter, the post-resurrected Christ,

his ascension, the stories of healings, teachings and miracles and the commands to love one another as we love ourselves. Elsewhere in this newsletter, the Rev. Phil Tonnesen, Assistant to the Bishop in the NC Synod shares a message that reminds us the tomb is empty and for now that is enough. As the tomb is indeed empty we are reminded we are Easter people. Death and the grave have been conquered, eternal life is ours, life now on this earth is ours. As we move into the last half of this year, it not an ending, it is simply a move into the next chapter of our faith journey. May God richly bless you as you experience and share the story of Jesus and his love.

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

Agape Day Camp

We will be offering Agape Day Camp this summer at the Mission Property from Monday July 19th – Friday July 23rd. This is for rising 1st – 8th graders and the cost is \$130.00 per camper. Scholarships are available. Look for registration forms which will be available soon.

Kure Beach Retreat

Our weekend at Kure Beach for Thursday July 22 – Sunday July 25. Cost is \$160 per person. Checks can be made out to St. Paul and earmarked "Kure Beach Trip."

2021 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



Birthdays

May 3	Morgan Lane
May 4	Betsy Lindler
May 8	Evelyn Sharkey
May 12	Natalie Lail
May 16	Paul Pero
May 20	Gail Bowman
May 24	Adam Fincannon
May 25	Katherine Thompson



Anniversaries

April 5	Noah Lindemann & Gena Poovey
May 3	Pastor Ralph & Mary Kraft
May 20	Danny & Sundee Southers
May 22	Richard & Gail Blackburn
May 29	David & Donna Miller

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



Church Council will meet Sunday May 9th in the Fellowship Hall immediately after worship. Please bring your Council packet with you which you should receive as email the Wednesday beforehand.

GIVE THANKS!

No, it's not Thanksgiving but May is a great time to give thanks for all the men and women, past and present, who serve in the United States Armed Services. May 15th is Armed Forces Day so plant that US flag by your front step or in a flower pot. And take a moment while grilling those burgers on Memorial Day to appreciate all the freedoms that we do have, including the freedom to worship how, when, where we want. Thank you, veterans!



WE ALL HAD ONE!

Yes, we have someone who dried our tears and calmed our fears. We had or have someone who makes us cakes and one who knows which stone is fake. We have someone who loves no matter what and who won't hesitate to say "you did WHAT?" So this May 9th you best remember Mum, Mom or Mommy whether your name is Sue, John or Tommy. Yes, bad poetry, but make up your own verse for your mother, whether she is in your heart or in your neighborhood. HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY to all the St. Paul mothers and those who are like a mother!



May 10th

So, what IS happening May 10th, the day after Mother's Day? Why, WELCA, of course!! Come join us in the Fellowship Hall where we can safely spread out and share an hour of faith, smiles and ideas. Our devotions will be led by Donna Pero. We hope to be working towards programs and projects that will benefit our church and community. Bring your ideas on what YOU would like to see St. Paul involved in.

WHAT A GIFT!

As we near the end of the 2021 Easter season, we are reminded while reading our daily devotions, attending Sunday worship and listening to Pastor Ralph's robocalls of the wonderful gift our Lord gave us over 2000 years ago: the gift of eternal life with Him. But that gift was purchased with the death of His only son, that He rose again on the third day. We mourn Jesus' death on Good Friday and celebrate His resurrection 3 days later on Easter morning. We have a family here at St. Paul that literally took Pastor Ralph's call to "be Christ-like" when their 30 year old grandson unexpectedly died two months ago. With Gayle and Sterling Jarrett and the rest of the Jarrett clan, we mourned with them at Tyler Jarrett's sudden passing. The family agreed to follow through with one of Tyler's last requests, that his organs be donated so that others might live. Tyler was kept on life support machinery while a February storm grounded all planes for almost 24 hours. The family was allowed to remain in the hallway outside the operating room while Tyler's "gifts" were prepared for delivery. Gayle and Sterling know that a man in West Virginia was given a kidney and pancreas. They do not know who received his lungs or other kidney. But, they (and we) celebrate that earthly life was extended to at least 3 people because of Tyler's bequest. What a gift!! And we pray that the recipients also have our Triune God in their lives so they can be twice blessed, both with longer earthly life AND eternal life in Christ.

Consider talking with your family and doctor about being an organ donor and complete any necessary documents if you haven't done so already. Your organs can, indeed, be a gift that keeps on giving, just like Tyler Jarrett's.



WHAT AN IMPROVEMENT!

May is a great time to enjoy the NC outdoors, before the 3 H's appear (hot, hazy, humid). A huge "thank you" goes to the boys of Cub Scout Pack 398 that usually meets at St. Paul's. In March and April, though, their meeting place was the walking trail and labyrinth at the Mission Property. They undertook the service project of cleaning up the trail, removing branches and debris, pulling weeds and making our path so much more enjoyable for everyone. They also learned how to make and apply a safe weed killer. They scraped moss (and knees?) and did it all with smiles. Appreciation also goes to Debra Young, their Cubmaster. So, if you see David, Hayden or Jacoby, be sure to give them a really HIGH five for all their unselfish work!

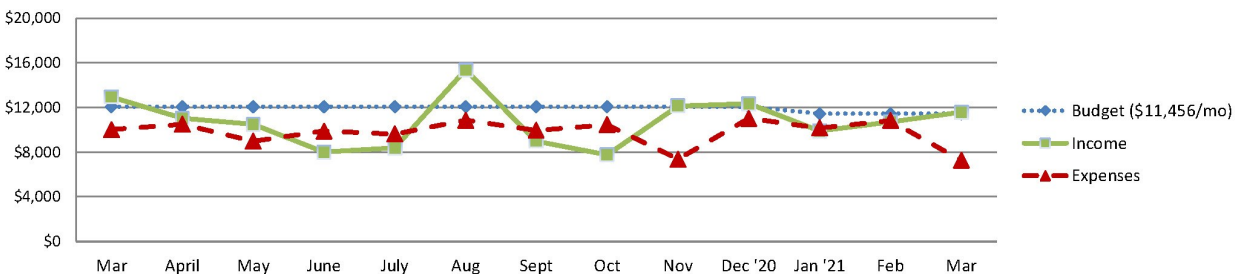


Council Notes

The St. Paul Church Council met in person on Sunday, April 11, 2021 at 11:36am. Highlights from the meeting include:

- The Mission Property is now open. First Aid kits to be updated or purchased for both the Mission Campus and the Main Campus.
- The NC Synod Assembly will be held virtually from June 3rd through June 5th. Pastor Ralph, Jonathan Jarrett, and Barbara Reed will attend as voting members. The theme this year is "Strength for the Journey." An important business item for this year's Assembly will be the election of the North Carolina Synod Bishop.

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



	Beginning Balance	Income	Expenses	Ending Balance		<u>Fund Balance</u>
General Fund	16,713.97	11,573.89	7,275.95	21,011.91	Gift & Memorial Fund:	<u>\$10,735.09</u>
Dedicated Fund	33,021.91	3,413.91	2,796.18	33,639.64	Mission Campus CD:	<u>\$151,999.43</u>
Current W/H Tax Payable	-6,875.42	285.46	0.00	-6,589.96		
Total General Fund	42,860.46			48,061.59		



Ministry in a Time of COVID-19



If you are like me, you know people who always seem to have a new car, or a new boat, or a new phone or other “techy” gadget...people who often talk about their money or their next vacation or their investments in new companies. Always fixating on what else they can acquire or experience, they just don’t seem to be very content. They never seem to be satisfied with what they have. Now, don’t get me wrong, usually, they are fine people who love and care for their family. They are neighbors or relatives or friends at church, always willing to lend a hand or share a tool. But they never seem to enjoy what they have for very long.

As we journey through this season of Easter, I wonder how many of us have learned the art of contentment. I struggle with it myself. Yes, Easter means new and abundant life, but are we content with what we have? Or, are we always fixated on what might be...the

next vacation...the next call in ministry...the next phase of life...retirement? According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the simple definition of content is: “satisfied, easy in mind.” Yes, Jesus came that we might have life and have it abundantly, but might we already be swimming in abundance that is enough? Are our minds at ease...are we satisfied?

As we begin year two of dealing with a global pandemic, may we be reminded over and over again that the tomb is empty....and that is enough. May we bask in the gift of contentment and seek to share that gift with others.

Be well and be safe,

The Rev. Phil Tonnesen
Assistant to the Bishop



2020 Year In Review

COVID-19 brought us both challenges and opportunities. ECCCM was considered an essential operation that would not close. With tremendous support from our community, ECCCM has responded in a positive manner to all needs.



8,120

volunteer hours logged,
saving the ministry \$220,864.00
through donations of time,
talents, and effort



30,469

client service interactions
provided to Catawba
County residents



7,343

individuals served



3,151

total households



13%

of ministry income was
provided by Thrifty
Threads and Treasures
Thrift Store sales



143

clothing vouchers
given to clients, worth
\$8,294 (fair market value)



26

average interviews / day

119

average food pick-ups / day



\$1.2 million

dollars provided for crisis assistance



1.6 million

pounds of food distributed through the
ECCCM Charlie Bunn Food Pantry

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.

PENTECOST

SUNDAY



ARE YOU "RED"Y?

Be sure you haven't packed away your red jacket, tie or sweater just yet. Or maybe you already unpacked your summer duds. Just be sure that you wear that red flower, dress, shirt or coat on May 23rd. That is our "wear red" Pentecost Sunday. Let's reinforce our welcoming the Holy Spirit into our lives that day and every day.