



Paul's Nev



Pastor's Corner **By Pastor Dave Heckler**

In quite a number of my past "Pastor's Corner" articles, I've spoken about many of the new challenges being faced by so many "mainline" congregations in America. We're certainly experiencing many of these same challenges here at St Paul's, and indeed in all the congregations in our Quakertown Lutheran Cluster: lower in-person worship attendance and participation in other congregational activities, increased financial stresses, increased maintenance challenges of sustaining older church buildings and grounds, fewer pastors coming out of seminary and fewer

congregations able to financially support pastors on a "full-time" call status, and the like.

It's why I've been actively working for the last several years to bring together our Quakertown Lutheran Cluster congregations in conversation and action to move us toward greater ministry collaboration with one another, not only in the short term, but in the long term as well. These conversations haven't been coming "from the top down", but from our pastors and laypeople "up"— and those conversations are beginning to bear fruit. Our synod's Co-Director of Evangelical Mission, Pr Bryan Penman, has been accompanying us on this journey and has called the energy and vision of our cluster "miraculous"; we've already come up with plenty of ideas for sharing in worship, fellowship, and service together; we've established a "Quakertown Area Lutherans" Facebook group and will soon have a Facebook page; and we have some clearer notion of how we might continue this collaboration exploration and process.

But in order to make this happen— in order to get the snazzy car off the showroom floor and onto the road— we need all of our Quakertown Lutheran Cluster congregations on board. Pr Penman has suggested that each congregation's Council pass a resolution affirming their participation in this process and appointing members of a task force to continue this study and strategic process. Here's the resolution I'm proposing:

Resolution to Participate in Quakertown Lutheran Cluster Collaboration Process

Whereas:

- The American "mainline Church" in general, and our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and our Quakertown Lutheran Cluster in particular, are currently undergoing significant demographic, congregational, ministerial, and social transitions, and
- Currently, only one of our Quakertown Lutheran Cluster congregations is being served by a "full-time" called pastor, another two* by "part-time" called pastors, and the rest by interim or "bridge" pastors serving congregations in the process of seeking to call new pastors, and
- Only one of our Quakertown Lutheran Cluster congregations can (currently) afford to call a pastor on a "fulltime" basis, and
- Several of our congregations face daunting and likely costly building maintenance challenges as well, and
- Many in the wider Church have noted that "The future is shared" [Pr Kevin McLemore]—that "Silos, 'lone rangers', and isolation have been the custom in many portions of Christ's community, and it's in part what's killing us" [Pr Bill Worley], and so "We have to expand our sense of 'we'" [Pr Dave Heckler], and
- The Church at all levels is recognizing that its traditional call processes, multiple-point parish formation processes, and the like no longer work effectively in the changing contexts of ministry, and is willing to explore new ways of handling these challenges, and
- The congregations of our Quakertown Lutheran Cluster are blessed with gifted lay leaders eager to explore and develop expanded possibilities for greater collaboration in our ministry together,

Be it resolved that:

St Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Applebachsville, as a congregation in the Quakertown Lutheran Cluster, will continue to participate in the conversations and explorations of its fellow Quakertown Lutheran Cluster congregations toward living into greater collaboration in mission and ministry; and

- St Paul's will identify and commission three people (likely including the pastor) to serve on a Quakertown Lutheran Cluster Ministry Collaboration Task Force which will continue to study our cluster's and congregations' missional contexts and collaborative possibilities and processes, and will actively support the efforts of this task force; and
- St Paul's will continue to be an active catalyst of increased collaboration in mission and ministry among the congregations of the Quakertown Lutheran Cluster, sharing its unique God-given gifts, talents, and insights eagerly and joyfully.

I'm including in this count the Kairos Community, a synodically authorized worshipping "house church" community served by Pr Bob Fisher, our synod's Director of Communications.

I'm presenting this resolution to our Council— but really, this is a topic we all ought to be talking about and praying about. Quite honestly, we're blessed to be able to be a real catalyst for this increased collaboration; even with the challenges we've faced together, we're actually in better shape than some of our comrades, and we're blessed with outstanding lay leadership. My prayer is that we'll joyfully take up that calling and challenge of being that catalyst, and so make a really positive difference throughout our Quakertown area.

Yours in Christ Jesus our Lord, Pr. Dave

Another Pastor's Corner

(Note: This month I'd like to share with you a reflection penned by another pastor, the Rev. Peter Marty, editor of "The Christian Century", and found in the April 2024 issue of the magazine.)

Much of the meaning we find in our personal lives stems from contributions by people we often neglect to thank. Individuals who impact us in untold ways inadvertently get overlooked. Some of the unsung heroes who've helped make me who I am are church musicians. Worship organizes my life and centers my soul in ways that you can only know by knowing me. But the music of worship is what has helped generate the particular kind of person I am.

Gifted church musicians know how to help people sing together. They're genius at helping a congregation get "lost in wonder, love, and praise," to borrow Charles Wesley's words, without simply getting lost. Week in and week out, these practitioners enlarge individual worlds, send chills up spines, and remind worshipers that singing is not an external option for our lives; it's an internal component of being fully human. This column is for all those who help congregations make music on a weekly basis but who might not often hear how much their work matters to those around them.

Every time a congregation gathers, a new community must form. Even if the assembly just met the previous week, its character has altered. Various component parts have shifted. Bodies have aged, however slightly. New joys have walked in the door. Fresh sorrows have settled into a back pew. Two tenors from the choir are missing. An elder has died. A baby gets happily passed around. A funny bulletin typo has people whispering. One of the spotlights above the pulpit is flickering annoyingly.

It's the musicians who must pay attention to all of the nuances of this new community. They have the job of listening closely to everything that's going on. They must assume responsibility for helping the boundaries and distinctions of this diverse group of people relax enough to become fresh solidarity. This is hard work that requires no small degree of faith, skill, and humility. But if it's successful, a bonding of people will occur. A thickness of congregational spirit will emerge. A weight of mystery will fill up the interior dimensions of people's lives. Those who thought they couldn't sing, or who don't want to sing, suddenly find themselves enveloped in lovely ways by the resonant voice of the church singing together.

Excellent church musicians— whether they play piano, lean into an organ, lead a band, compose music, or direct a choir—are theologians in their own right. They're people convinced that the glory of God is central to honest worship and not just some Jesus-y feelings that can well up inside the bellies of hungry worshipers. They're busy fighting for the congregation to find its voice, yearning for each and every soul to discover that

singing is sacred duty. Church musicians who've given the greatest shape to my life are those who appear to delight more in getting music into my soul than just out of theirs. Yes, the talent of their hands, feet, and vocal cords may be awesome, which is beautiful. But the way they deploy their abilities determines whether the rest of us feel bigger or smaller than when we arrived.

Eugene Peterson suggests that song is the result of excess energy. "When we are normal, we talk," says Peterson. "When we are dying, we whisper. But when there is more in us than we can contain, we sing." The next time you find yourself in worship experiencing more joy than you can hold inside yourself, sing like your life depends on it. And then, flag down your music leader on your way out the door to let them know of your gratitude...

Peter W. Marty

Peter W. Marty is editor/publisher of "The Christian Century" and senior pastor of St Paul Lutheran Church in Davenport, Iowa.

Finance Updates:

1. Vanguard Account Balances:

As of March 28, 2024, \$110,181.50; February 29 2024, \$107,473.51; January 31, 2024, \$105,868.75

Income statement: March 31, 2024, (expenses over income for the year to date \$8490.75); February 29, 2024 (\$7,485.20). She will recast certain monthly expenses on a monthly basis rather than as lump sums paid at once (eg, insurance costs).

3. Stewardship:

- a. Painting campaign: of \$9940 pledged (3-year campaign ends 2026), \$5416 donated to date in 2023. This is different from Karen's records (\$5609). She will contact Wendy and also note that \$1000 was donated in 2022. Working to reconcile records. **OPEN**
- **b.** <u>Pledge reports:</u> Sara has asked Wendy to provide individual donations reports in July as well as quarterly pledge reports for Finance. Hopefully, this will encourage members to keep up with their pledges. After tax season, Sara will send an email encouraging members to donate a portion of their tax return as an extra gift to the church.
- **c.** New rotation for counting: Tom 4-7, Sara 4-14, Bill 4-21, Patty 4-28, Karen 5-5, Tom 5-12, Sara 5-19.



Check it Out: "The Bible Project"



At last year's Vacation Bible School, Rose Sutkins suggested that we check out "The Bible Project" on YouTube. The Bible Project creates free resources—videos, podcasts, Bible reading plans, and even classes, many of them wonderfully animated and all of them scholastically and theologically solid—to help you experience the Bible. Check them out at bibleproject.com, on YouTube at www.youtube.com/@BibleProjectPodcast, or download their app at bibleproject.com/app/.



May Worship News

Thank God it's springtime! Thank God it's May! The weather's getting warmer (and staying warm more consistently), the sun's higher in the sky, and we're rejoicing in the resurrection victory and the risen life of Christ Jesus our Lord. And this year, the month of May brings us into the season of Pentecost as well— and with it, the beginning of new opportunities for our worship life. Here's what coming up this month:

- + We begin May with a special "Rachel's Day" Eucharist May 5. "Rachel's Day" is an observance pioneered through the Women of the ELCA which testifies to the prevalence of violence towards our children, remembering those children already lost to violence and praying for those who still remain in its clutches. Our special guest presiding minister will be the Rev. Stephanie [Sutter] Steele, Sascha Baringer's sister. Invite your friends and neighbors and come join us!
- + On May 12, we'll celebrate the Ascension of Our Lord, rejoicing not in Jesus' departure from us, but the transformation of His presence with us from tangible visibility to ubiquity. As the classic hymn sings, "Christ is alive! No longer bound to distant years in Palestine, He comes to claim the here and now and conquer every place and time." (And in Pr Dave's definitely unofficial terms, this marks the beginning of the "Spring Trifecta" of Ascension, Pentecost, and Holy Trinity...) May 12 is also Mothers' Day— a great day to celebrate God's shepherding love displayed in the lives of all the women who've nurtured us with grace, wisdom, and self-giving love.
- + May 19 is the Day of Pentecost— the culmination of the Easter season in which we celebrate God's gift of the Holy Spirit to the disciples, birthing the Church as the body of Christ alive in the world. It's a time to wear our brightest red clothing in celebration of the fire of the Spirit.
- + And May 26 is the Feast of the Holy Trinity, the Sunday in which we rejoice particularly not simply in what God's done, but in who God is— and so learn more fully what it means to be human beings created in God's image. (This is also Memorial Day Weekend, so we'll be remembering those who died in the service of our country.)
- + And after that Trinity Sunday service on May 26 and continuing through much of the summer, we'll be using a more contemporary "blended" liturgy. Our worship leaders won't even be "robing up" throughout the summer— so we'll definitely have a more contemporary feel. And while the choir may be "on vacation" after May 26, we're lining up plenty of our own homegrown musicians to provide special music through the summer.
- + And remember that we're sharing in worship and fellowship together **both in person and online.** We'll keep on "**livestreaming**" our worship services via Facebook Live and streaming the audio of our services via our Free Conference Call line (857.232.0157, conference code 144261).

Monday Morning Bible Study

Our formerly "Thursday Morning Bible Study" has moved to Mondays! Come join us each week for our Monday Morning Bible Study from 10:00 AM-12:00 NN via Zoom or Free Conference Call! (To join us via Zoom, go to zoom.us, click "Join a Meeting" at the top right of the page, use meeting ID 370 014 7169, and if it asks for a password, use 119805 and you should be in. If you're using your phone, these dial-in numbers will work to access Zoom: 929.205.6099 or 312.626.6799. After you dial, you'll be asked for the host's code, and you'll type in 370 014 7169, then 119805 and you're in. To use Free Conference Call [FCC], dial 857.232.0157, enter conference code 144261, and you're in.) We're digging into the Scripture readings for the upcoming week to discover the treasures that await us come Sunday. You don't have to be a bibli-



cal "expert" to get a lot out of this study— so come on out and invite your friends to join you!

Synod and Conference News

+ Our 2024 Southeast Penn Synod Assembly will be held on May 3-4 at Franconia Mennonite Meetinghouse, with the theme being "Chosen, Called, Sent". We'll be electing a new bishop at this Assembly, as Bp Pat Davenport will be retiring. (We ask your prayers for the election process. We know that the Spirit will reveal the right person.) We'll be represented by Pr Dave, Brett Shaw, and Patty Schumacher. (Our Synod will also be livestreaming the Assembly on its Facebook page SEPASynod, its website www.ministrylink.org, and its YouTube page @SEPASynod – so you don't even need to leave home to share in the proceedings and the joy!)



+ Our next Quakertown Lutheran Cluster Collaboration meeting is scheduled for May 23 @ 7:00 PM at Trinity, Quakertown's Annex Building. We've had excellent representation from all our cluster congregations in these conversations, and our synod's Co-Director of Evangelical Mission, Pr. Bryan Penman, is working with us to map out a process for us to deepen our sharing together in ministry in the Quakertown area. And we're already beginning to line out some cluster-wide activities for the

summer months, including this year's Quakertown Cluster Picnic, at least one cluster-wide worship service (likely outside), volleyball gatherings, youth bonfires, movie nights, and the like.

Our Upper Bucks Lutheran Conference is planning "Lutheran Day at the Iron Pigs" on Sunday, June 23 at Coca-Cola Park outside of Allentown, with gates opening at 12:35 PM and the first pitch at Tickets for this 1:35 PM. event are \$30/person, which includes a 2½-hour all-you-can -eat buffet, unlimited soft drinks through the eighth inning, and seating at the Picnic Patio along the left-field line. Children under 2 are free. If vou're interested in attending this game, please let Kelly Shaak know (and please get your check in) ASAP. Make checks payable to "St Paul's Lutheran Church" with "UBC Lutherans @ Iron Pigs" in the memo line. (This way, Karen can send our conference treasurer Pr Bradley Gow a single check for all of us, thus preserving his sanity...

)





May 11, 2024
Concert is FREE
Doors open 5 pm
Concert 6 pm - 7:45 pm

First UCC Church Quakertown 151 South 4th Street Quakertown 18951



There will be an opportunity to give a donation if you are interested.

100% of donations go to support The Drop.





Happy to share this news with everyone!

Welcome Aly Brown....our new assistant office administrator!

She will be training with Katherine again this coming week. We wish both of them the best moving forward.

-St. Paul's Exec. Comm.-

Join Us Online via Zoom or Free Conference Call!

If you'd like to participate in most of our activities taking place over **Zoom**, go to *zoom.us*, click "Join a Meeting" at the top right of the page, use meeting ID **370 014 7169**, and if it asks for a password, use **119805** and you should be in.



FaceTime

If you're **using your phone**, these dial-in numbers will work to access Zoom: 929.205.6099 or 312.626.6799. After you dial, you'll be asked for the host's

code, and you'll type in 370 014 7169, then 119805 and you're in. (What's more, with your smart phone or computer, you can engage video as well as audio, so we can see and hear you— something that's precious right now!) You can also use **Free Conference Call [FCC]:** Dial 857.232.0157, enter conference code 144261, and you're in.

Supporting Our Ministries

Thanks for continuing to support our ministries here at St Paul's! Your tithes and offerings are much needed during this time; we're already in deficit mode this year, even with keeping our spending pretty restrained—so your offerings are especially needed.

You can financially support our ministries in several ways: [1] If you're already signed up for Simply Giving, you're already taken care of; [2] You can mail your offerings to the church; and now [3] You can go to our church website (<u>www.stpaulsqtown.org</u>) and make your contributions online, even using a credit or debit card. Whatever way you choose, your contributions help us continue to serve our congregation and community and build upon the good things God's doing through us.



May's "Monthly Special": Quakertown Food Pantry

Our "Monthly Specials" and "Noisy Offerings" are special opportunities for giving to help specific ministries in our community and beyond—some of them through the Lutheran church, others through the community organizations. For May, our Monthly Special Recipient is the Quakertown Food Pantry. We've been an integral part of this community-

wide ministry through the years, but as springtime blooms in all its fullness, we have a special opportunity to support this life-giving ministry. Please give as you're able!

And remember, our Social Ministry Team is now helping **pack food bags at the Quakertown Food Pantry** the first Thursday of every month from 1:00-3:00 PM. No experience necessary— everyone's welcome to provide this vital ministry to the community. Contact Sara George, <u>primrose40@aol.com</u> or 215.538.3786 if you're interested in helping.

Scouts BSA Troop 007 News

- We're so thankful for St Paul's welcome and support. But right now, there's one more thing we really need to continue to survive and hopefully, thrive: We need more Scouts! The mission of the Boy Scouts of America is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law. If you know a parent or grandparent of kids from kindergarten to high school, encourage them to visit one of our Scout meetings on Thursday nights, or check us out at Scouts007.org.
- We now have a fully chartered Cub Scouts Pack 007 at St Paul's! Many thanks to Rich and Robin Beaumont, Sharin Babb, and John Hunsberger for their hard work and leadership in bringing this troop together and leading it. Currently we have seven Cub Scouts, three returning and four new; however, two Cubs may be dropping out due to their parents' work schedules. The Cub Pack needs parent participation for activities and camping. They meet every Wednesday at 7:00 PM at St Paul's.
- The troop will be purchasing a trailer from another Scout troop in May, using funds from our congregation's Parish House Tithe. Donna Wyatt (our Charter Organization Representative, or CRO) is still working with Tom Sutkins on the liability insurance and how to properly title the trailer.
- Here are some of our upcoming activities:
- The Scouts will enjoy their Spring Camporee May 17-19. They're also preparing for this year's Summer Camp @ Ockanickón Scout Reservation July 14-20.

St. Paul's Hoagie Sale

The best hoagies around are the ones we make! Featuring turkey with and without onions; Italian with and without onions. \$7 each or THREE for \$20. Place your or-



der by May 12th. Pick up Saturday, May, 18, 11:30-12:30. Order forms are in the Fellowship Hall. Give money to Sascha or Sata. Proceeds to help community outreach. Sponsored by Social Ministry.

Congratulations!!!



Congratulations to our graduates this spring: Ethan Bauman, college; Anna Brumbach, college; Jamie Hallman, college; Jacob Baringer, high school; Andie Silvius,

high school. Also from college, Dave and Jean Noblit's grandson, Adam Noblit; and Tom and Rose's granddaughter, Madison Apple. Best wishes!



Like Us on Facebook (and Otherwise Online)!

Did you know that St Paul's maintains an active church website, as well as several Facebook pages? Check out our online presence at the following sites:

Our church website:

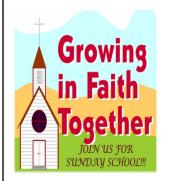
Our email address:

Our Facebook page:

Our Joyful Noise Facebook page:

For daily Morning & Evening Prayer:

www.stpaulsqtown.org stpaulsqtown@gmail.com www.facebook.com/StPaulsQtown www.facebook.com/joyfulnoiseatstpauls https://dailyoffice.wordpress.com/



Sunday School is Back!

Kids, come join us for Sunday School at St Paul's from 10:15-11:15 AM on the second and fourth Sundays of each month. (In May, that's the 12th & 26th.) We have room for all students age 4 through fifth grade, with older kids being helpers/leaders— and we have a great group of students ready to welcome you. Spread the word and join us for Sunday School!

"The Hand of God Shall Hold You..."

One of the great blessings of life in union with Christ is that the risen Christ binds us in holy and eternal communion with all His people who've *died*, enabling us to grieve in the freedom born of knowing that our loved ones are gone from our sight and for a time, but still joined with us in the body of Christ and alive in Him in far more than memory alone. So far in 2024, we've also said farewell (for now) to Mitsy Foulke, Sue Becknell, Edna Hottensen, Jolly Ekpe, Jodi Ritto, Dick Wimmer, Irma Guinther, and Gunars Berzins. Please keep their grieving families and friends in your



prayers in these days ahead, that they may come through the dark night of their grief into the resurrection joy born of their Baptismal union with Christ Jesus our risen Lord.

Happy Birthday, Friends!

- 5/2 Cori Barndt
- 5/3 Sascha Baringer Patricia Stever
- 5/5 Lexi Schnabel
- 5/9 Michelle Hunsberger
- 5/17 Rachel Gullett
- 5/18 Cathy Long
- 5/20 Denise Shaeffer
- Gary Hertzog 5/21
- 5/30 Ethan Bauman



And Happy Baptismal Birthday Too!



We celebrate people's biological birthdays all the time, and rightly. But as wonderful as receiving the gift of life in this world is, receiving the gift of new and eternal life in Christ Jesus in our Baptism is even more wonderful (and best of all, it never grows old!). Why shouldn't we celebrate the anniversary of our new birth in Christ even more gladly? So Happy Baptismal Birthday this month to Lauren Gibson, Jake Gordon, Vanessa Hamlin, Linda Hertzog, Austin Hunsberger, Winnie Knapp, Robin Lawrence, Caitlyn Long, Cathy Long, David Long, Cole Sauerwald, and Aaron Shimalla.



May2024 St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Applebachsville

Sun.	Mon. Tues.		Wed. Thurs.		Fri. Sat.	
Sun.	Mon.	Tues.				
			1 7:00 pm Cub Scouts	2 1:00 pm Bagging Food at Quakertown Food Pantry 7:00 pm Scouts	3 1:00 pm Al Anon 7:00 pm A.A. SE Penn Synd	d Assembly
5 9:00 am "Rachel's Day" Worship & Livestream worship www.facebook.com/ StPaulsQtown 10:30 am Fellowship Hour	6 10:00 am Zoom Bible Study	7 7:00 pm Scout Leader Meeting	8 7:00 pm Cub Scouts	9 7:00 pm Scouts	10 1:00 pm Al Anon 7:00 pm A.A.	11 6:00 pm Concert Night @ First UCC Qtown
9:00 am Worship & Livestream Worship www.facebook.com/ StPaulsQtown 10:15 am Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship Hour Happy Mother's Day! St. Paul's HOAGIE & FLOWER Orders Due	13 10:00 am Zoom Bible Study 10:00 am Social Ministry Meeting 7:30 pm Zoom Finance Meeting	14	15 7:00 pm Cub Scouts	16 7:00 pm Scouts	17 1:00 pm Al Anon 7:00 pm A.A. Scouts Sprin	18 10:00 am Arts Alive! Qtown 11:30am- 12:30pm Hoagie Pick Up g Camporee
9:00 am Pentecost Worship & Livestream Worship www.facebook.com/ StPaulsQtown 10:30 am Fellowship Hour Scouts Camporee	20 10:00 am Zoom Bible Study 7:00 pm Council Meeting	21	5:30 pm Music and Worship Meeting 7:00 pm Cub Scouts Newsletter Deadline	7:00 pm Scouts 7:00 pm Qtown Cluster Collab. @ Trinity	24 1:00 pm Al Anon 7:00 pm A.A.	25
9:00 am Worship & Livestream Worship 10:15 am Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship Hour	27 10:00 am Zoom Bible Study Memorial Day	28	7:00 pm Cub Scouts	30 7:00 pm Scouts	31 1:00 pm Al Anon 7:00 pm AA	

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Applebachsville

849 Old Bethlehem Road Quakertown, PA 18951

Pastor David Heckler

stpaulsqtown@gmail.com www.stpaulsqtown.org Church: 215-536-5789

Each Member of the Congregation, Ministers

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The St. Paul's News

May 2024