



December 2016 KEEPING IN TOUCH

NEWSLETTER OF THE ST. PAUL LUTHERAN AND ROMAN CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF FAITH

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Interim Lutheran Pastor**
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Our Mission

Saint Paul Church is an open, affirming and diverse community of faith representing two Christian traditions, that of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and that of the Roman Catholic Church.

Each tradition maintains and honors its own heritage, and each worships according to

its own liturgical practices. As one community of faith, the members of the respective traditions work together in social outreach and shared hospitality. Together, we rejoice in the manner in which diversity has enriched, nurtured and challenged the life and ministry we share in Christ and regret actions and attitudes

throughout the Church that may have inhibited or prevented access to Word and Sacrament because of age, race, socio-economic or marital status, physical or mental capacities, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

We are a Reconciling in Christ Community.

Pastor's Corner

Grace and Peace from the one who is, who was and who is to come!

I am so excited to be with you during this time of transition. St Paul's has always been an iconic part of the Denver downtown and I believe you continue to have the potential to be an important leader in the city for good.

I am a second career pastor who worked as the director for several small non-profits dealing with women and child abuse issues before I followed my sense of call to become a pastor. I've now been a pastor for 24 years all of them served in the greater Denver metro area. I recently left my call of 12.5 years to follow this new call to Intentional Interim Ministry.

I am a native Coloradoan, born in Estes Park in 1950 (no I'm not afraid to share my age). I lived in Kansas for a few years as a child and for 4 years in California while I completed my M.Div. but otherwise have always lived in Colorado. I grew up in Boulder during the turbulent 60s and 70s, and those times shaped my awareness of social justice issues. I dropped out of church in the 70s feeling that the church was irrelevant to the times. I came back in the early 80s for the sake of my children, but it wasn't until I started working with abused children that I began to understand the power of God's love in my life and that of these wounded children. I went to seminary from that awakening.

I live in Broomfield with my "sort of" daughter-in-law, Becky (it's a long story and I don't mind sharing; it's just too much for this article), my golden retriever, Mesa, and her cats, Lucy and Zena. My daughter Ronni and her husband live in Lakewood, and my son David passed away in 2010 (that's another long story for another time). I married, divorced and remarried, but now I am a widow. My husband passed away in 2008.

I will have regular office hours but don't know yet what's going to work best. Please feel free to call me, 303-718-6401, text me, or email me, penni124@comcast.net, with any concerns.

This time of transition is going to need all of you so please participate in all the ways you can.

God's blessings,

Pastor Penni

December Adult Forum

Adult Forum meets on Sunday mornings from 9:15-10:15 am in the Dorothy Day Room to explore a variety of topics. A December series, entitled Pericopes for Advent and exploring the lectionary readings for each of the four Sundays in Advent, will continue through December 18.

Readings to be studied on Sunday, December 11, include Isaiah 35.1-10, James 5.7-10, Matthew 11.2-11; readings for the following Sunday are Isaiah 7.10-16, Romans 1.1-7, and Matthew 1.18-25. Led by Jim Harrer and Maryann O'Brien. Do plan to join us!

Christmas Liturgy Schedule

Advent: Wednesday, December 14

7:30 pm — As you prepare to celebrate the coming of Christ into human history at Christmas, spend some time in deepening your prayer and your relationship with Him. Join in an evening of prayer and reflection at St Paul on December 14th at 7:30 pm.

Christmas Eve: Saturday, December 24

4:00 pm—NEW THIS YEAR: Christmas Eve Family Candlelight Mass with Blessing of the Crèche

7:00 pm—Christmas Eve Candlelight Mass with Mixed Quartet and Strings (Prelude begins at 6:45 pm)

11:00 pm—Christmas Eve Candlelight Mass with the Saint Paul Choir and Strings (Prelude begins at 10:30 pm)

Christmas Day: Sunday, December 25

10:30 am—Christmas Day Mass (Please note: There will be NO 8:00 am liturgy that morning!)

New Year's Eve: Saturday, December 31

5:00 pm—Christmas I Catholic Mass

New Year's Day: Sunday, January 1

10:30 am—Christmas I Lutheran Mass (Please note: There will be NO 8:00 am liturgy that morning!)

Epiphany: Saturday, January 7

5:00 pm—Epiphany Sunday Catholic Mass

Epiphany: Sunday, January 8

8:00 am—Epiphany Sunday Lutheran Mass

10:30 am—Epiphany Sunday Lutheran Mass with Children's Tableau

A Visit from the Bishop – November 26 and 27

The Rev. Jim Gonia, Bishop of the ELCA Rocky Mountain Synod, preached at St. Paul on November 26 and 27. This is an excerpt of his sermon during our Saturday night Catholic service.

My beloved sisters and brothers in Christ: grace, mercy and peace be with you from our God who is love, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

I'm so grateful to be with you on this First Sunday in Advent. I want to thank Father Don for welcoming me into the pulpit tonight. I also want to express my profound gratitude to him and to all of you in the Catholic congregation here at St Paul for the way in which you have accompanied your Lutheran brothers and sisters during these last months, for your continued engagement during this time of pastoral transition. I know that the relationship shared here is unique and precious, and while we don't quite know what it will look like down the road, we trust in God's faithfulness and in the Spirit's guidance.

I, for one, take heart in recent events, especially in the participation of Pope Francis in last month's Reformation Day worship with leaders of the Lutheran World Federation in Lund, Sweden. I was just in Geneva Switzerland at our LWF offices a little over a week ago for a consultation on mission, and I can tell you that it was still very much on everyone's mind. For so many of us within the Lutheran Communion, it's our fervent hope and prayer that this 500th commemoration of the Reformation becomes a moment when we not only identify and discuss the importance of our growing unity as Christ's Church, but that we take the next concrete steps in realizing that unity. May it be so.

I want to share with you that this time of transition here at St Paul comes just as we in the Rocky Mountain Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America have completed a strategic planning process that names our shared sense of mission in this way: together we proclaim and embody God's unconditional love for the sake of the world. Our plan goes on to name four ways in which we hope to live out that mission: by claiming our gifts, by



connecting in ministry and witness, by equipping all leaders, by accompany one another into God's future. At the end of the day, it's about living and serving as Christ's Church, better together: better together, yes, as fellow members of the ELCA, but better together ecumenically, better together with our neighbors of other faiths, better together with the communities we serve. I thought it might be helpful for you to know this.

So here we are at the beginning of Advent. I don't know about you, but for me Advent comes just in the nick of time. I say that not because Advent is the start of the church year and at the new year we look for a chance to reboot and regroup. No, for me Advent is welcome because it is our invitation to face uncertainty with wakeful faith. To face uncertainty with wakeful faith. Advent calls us to stand on the cusp of the unknown, to be positioned at the edge of uncertainty, and to welcome whatever comes with faith awakened by our experience of God's loving and abiding presence in this very moment.

If there was ever a moment when we were already positioned on the edge of uncertainty, when we were already standing on the cusp of the unknown, it's now. There's the palpable sense of uncertainty in our nation right now, none of us knowing what the future holds. In this uncharted territory some are excited, but many others are filled with anxiety.

...

You see what I mean? Advent could not come at a better time, because Advent is our invitation to face all uncertainty with wakeful faith.

Our readings today give us insight into this wakeful faith. The prophet Isaiah awakens us to a faith lived in the light of the Lord, a faith shaped by a vision of God's promise for us and for this world. It's a vision that shows us not just what God intends but what God is actively bringing about – God is actively bringing about a world in which divisions are overcome, a world in which swords become plowshares. God is bringing about a world in which that which draws us together supersedes any force that can separate us from one another.

Now I know that's not always self-evident. When we look around, the contrary seems to be true – our divisions and separations seem greater than ever, our differences too great to bridge. War, not peace, seems to rule of the day. But that, my beloved, is the view from the shadows of this world, not the light.

Wakeful faith is faith that walks in the light, a light not of our own making but the light of the Lord, the light of the One who is the source of all light. And that light can be trusted, especially when we ourselves are still caught in the shadows.

The Apostle Paul gets that. His words to the people in Rome speak to all of us trapped in the shadows: you know what time it is, it's the moment for you to wake from sleep – to step out of the shadows and into light. Salvation is nearer to us now than ever – the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us put on the armor of light. Let us put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Do you see what this means? Wakeful faith, faith draws us from the shadows to walk in the light, is baptismal faith. We don't have to go searching for it; it's already ours. In the waters of the font we are already clothed with Christ's own light and love and hope. That's what we bring to all the uncertainty that lies before us. We are Christ's own people, his Body in the world, wounded yes, but alive; broken yet blessed, fully equipped to proclaim and embody God's unconditional love for the sake of the world. Wakeful faith is already ours – not in some promised future, but right here, right now.

Which is where we tend to get hung up. You see whenever there is a choice between living in some imagined future or living this present moment, we tend to opt for the imagined future. It's a very subtle but consistent trick of what Paul calls the flesh, but which today we rightly called the ego. Listen to Paul's warning this way: Make no provisions for the ego, to gratify its desires.

You see, what the ego desires is to keep you from this present moment – to keep you sidelined in the shadows of anxiety over a future filled with all those unknowns. And if that doesn't work the ego will keep you engaged in future uncertainty by dangling a carrot that's always just out of reach assuring you "the best is yet to come." The desire of your ego is to do anything to keep you from this present moment because the ego knows that it's only in this present moment that you can truly experience God. Only in this present moment can you be truly awake.

...

And so whether I am eating or drinking, marrying or giving in marriage as in the days of Noah, this is not some distraction: this is where God shows up. Whether I'm working in the field or grinding meal together with another, this is not some mere task; this is my vehicle for experiencing God's faithful presence in my life. When every moment IS a connection to the God in whose light and love I live, I can't help but be awake, can't help but be attentive to anything that would rob me of that experience.

It's no coincidence that in times when we are tempted to step back into the shadows, tempted to fall asleep, tempted to succumb to the ego's desire to dwell in an imagined future, we have placed before us a very simple, ordinary meal made of grain from the field and fruit of the vine, a meal in which we experience the here-and-now presence of a Lord who grants us wakeful faith. As we touch and taste yet again the abiding presence of the One who feeds us with his very life, we become once more what we already are: God's Advent people, able to face every uncertainty in faith, in hope, in love – clothed in the light of Christ himself.

So welcome to Advent, dear people. Just in the nick of time, don't you think?

Thanks be to God. AMEN.

MUSIC AT SAINT PAUL

Dark Horse Baroque Brass Consort on 9 December

On Friday, 9 December 2016, at 7:30 pm, Colorado's Seicento Baroque Ensemble is pleased to present the Dark Horse Consort, one of the country's premier early music brass ensembles, in a program of 17th-century Christmas music entitled, Music of the Nativity. Repertoire for cornettos and sackbuts (early trumpets and trombones, respectively) will vary from jaunty Spanish Christmas villancicos to serenely austere Flemish motets and German carols that are still familiar to our modern ears. Visit www.seicentobaroque.org for more information.

Rocky Mountain Ringers on 16 December

On Friday, 16 December 2016, at 7:30 pm, the Rocky Mountain Ringers, Denver's leading semi-professional handbell ensemble, presents joyous holiday music in a concert entitled, Hark! Hear the Bells, under the direction of Jeffrey Harms. Visit www.rmringers.com for more information.

Columbine Chorale on 18 December

On Sunday, December 18, at 4:00 pm, the Columbine Chorale, led by Music Director Brian Eichenberger, will present Here We Come A-Caroling, a holiday concert of festive choral music. Visit www.columbinechorale.org for more information.

Cornell University Glee Club on 12 January

On Thursday, 12 January 2017, at 7:30 pm, the 55-voice Cornell University Glee Club, Cornell's oldest student organization (founded in 1868) and one of the nation's finest collegiate ensembles, will present one of nine concerts comprising a Southwest Mid-winter Tour of Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, and Utah. Visit www.gleeclub.com for more information.

HOUSING NEEDED

Cornell University's Glee Club will perform a concert on January 12 of next year and they need housing that night for some of the young men from the choir. Hosts will be asked to take choristers home after the concert and bring them back on the morning of the 13th. Anything we can do to help them with housing defrays the cost to the self-funded group. If you have any availability in your home, please contact Mark at (720) 274-4708 or mark@stpauldenver.org.

Music and Altar Adornment for Christmas

I would like to make a special gift for **Christmas Music** AND/OR for **Christmas Altar Adornment**

in memory of OR in honor of OR in thanksgiving for (circle one): _____

Name: _____ I am enclosing \$ _____

Please place this coupon, along with your gift, in the offering plate or return it to the office by Friday morning, December 21.

Children's Church News

Our lessons for Advent focus on God's love for all people as evidenced in the stories of the Annunciation (November 27), Journey to Bethlehem (December 4), Birth of Jesus (December 11), Coming of the Shepherds (December 18).

Art, drama, music, and storytelling will remind us how much God loves us and all people. Children come to worship with their adults at 10:30am. Following the children's sermon, early in worship, the children and teachers go to their classroom. Teachers bring the children to join their parents just before Holy Communion.

Wendy and Jordan Pagels, and Dena Williams very much enjoy teaching Children's Church. We began in February, continued until June of this year, started again in September, and will continue through December 18. The number of children in attendance has varied widely during these months. At present, we have 2 children who come nearly every Sunday, and 1 child who comes every other Sunday. Although our numbers are occasionally greater, we find the 3 children who come consistently need a larger peer group in order to thrive.

Thus, our last Sunday to lead Children's Church



will be December 18, unless we hear from parents who are eager to bring their children to church on a more regular basis. We will need a commitment from several families in order to continue teaching. We love each child who joined us over our time as teachers! Our time with the children is joyful and rewarding. If, in the future there are more families interested in participating, we are happy to begin again.

THEATRE & THEOLOGY

THE BOOK OF WILL at the Ricketson theatre on 01/24/17 at 6:00 PM is a hilarious, heartfelt story of the characters behind the stories of William Shakespeare that we know so well. After his death, two actors compiled the First Folio to preserve the words that shaped their lives. Purchase deadline is 01/3/17. Ticket cost is \$35.00 made payable to The Rocky Mountain Synod. Note on check T&T: The Book of Will, St. Paul. Mail to Dorothy Stenman, 818 Logan Street #1203; Denver, CO 80203-3125.

Foundation Grants Now Available

Foundation earnings of \$3,870 from 2015 are currently available to be distributed as grants for congregational projects. Applications will be received through the end of February by sending a detailed written request to Bonnie Carlson at bdcarlson5@gmail.com.

Book Talk

Monday, 12 December 2016, 7:00 pm, at the home of Bonnie Carlson, 480 South Marion Parkway, #1206, Denver, to discuss the book, Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children, by Ransom Riggs.

If you like to read, come join the group—new readers are always welcome! Contact Bonnie Carlson (303.722.9892) for more information.

Volunteer Opportunities

Lutheran Family Services Holiday Gift Giveaway For Refugee Families

By Anna Hanel

Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains Refugee and Asylee Programs hosts a gift wrapping and delivering event every December for their newest refugee families. Volunteers from the Denver area purchase, wrap, and deliver presents to families experiencing their first holiday season in the U.S..

This year the Gift Giveaway will be held at Crawford Elementary school, 1600 Florence St in Aurora (right across from the Elmira Clinic) on Friday 12/9 and Saturday 12/10. The event will run Friday from 1-5pm and Saturday from 9am - 3:30 pm. Friday

consists of wrapping and Saturday includes more wrapping and delivering (by car) of presents to the families' apartments.

LFS says anyone wanting to donate presents can bring unwrapped gifts to their Denver office at 1600 Downing St., 6th floor. PLEASE NOTE: they are generally lacking in gifts for young adults ages 16-25, especially men. They say they get enough donations from other congregations for other age groups, so if we'd like to help, they ask that we only donate gifts for that age group.

I took part as a delivery person last year, and it was a wonderful

experience. Bring your phone/GPS!

If you have questions about this event, you can reach case management aide Anna Lawler at anna.lawler@lfsrm.org or 303-389-2339. She asks that if you know you'll show up as a volunteer to wrap and/or deliver on either the 9th or 10th, please RSVP online:

www.refugeevolunteerdenver.org/simple-schedule.

Feel free to also contact me with any questions: annabhanel@gmail.com.

Thank you!

Knitting for Grant Avenue Street Reach

By Carolyn Bolden

Some of you may remember that in the past I've shared with you my interest in knitting for Grant Street Reach. A number of years ago on a day when we were snowbound I decided to knit. I looked through some old books on the shelf, found instructions on the internet and with the help of fluffy yarn and big needles 3 weeks later I had 15 new scarves. I gave some away and decided I needed to find something else to knit. A friend of mine was doing a knitting project at her church, so I knit 15 hats for children in Nepal. The hats were fun to do, they worked up quickly and I used old yarn that had been taking up space in my house for years. The Nepal project was quickly over but I decided that I could just keep on knitting for Street Reach. Unlike our homeless neighbors, I have plenty of food

to eat and a warm place to sleep and several boxes of yarn (thanks to those of you who have donated yarn). Hats, scarves, mittens, I even tried a sweater.

If any of you would like to knit for Grant Street Reach, you are welcome to leave items with me and I'll make sure they get to the right place. Crocheting and sewing works too. Please contact me if you need patterns or help getting started, I'm happy to share the little knowledge I have and patterns I have found. If we organize, maybe we can keep a few more people warm during this cold winter.

Another idea I have is fleece – 1 yard of fleece at the fabric store is 4 scarves each 9 inches wide. All you need is a yard of fabric and scissors.

If you sew – 1 yard of fleece fabric is 2 hats, or several warm fuzzy headbands.

Volunteer Opportunities



Offer hope this holiday season by joining LIRS in writing Christmas cards and purchasing gifts for children impacted by immigration detention.

As Lutherans, we are challenged to meet those displaced by violence with God's love. Never has the call been more urgent or clear.

This Advent season, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) is offering several ways that individuals and Lutheran congregations across the country can stand in solidarity with migrants and refugees in our communities. Give the gift of hope through participating in the following activities:

1. Offer prayers for migrants and refugees
2. Organize a Thanksgiving dinner "Breaking Bread and Building Bridges" event
3. Participate in our holiday card writing campaign and online gift drive to bring joy to the children isolated in family detention facilities in Texas and Pennsylvania
4. Sign the petition to end family detention

Visit us at <http://lirs.org/hopefortheholidays> to learn more.

Fleece Navidad

For many years members of St. Paul have generously provided new warm fleece sweat suits for some of the residents of St. Paul Health Center on St. Paul Street.

If you would like to be a part of this outreach, please take a tag off the tree in the back of the church. It will tell you a size and gender for the sweatshirt and pants you are to buy.

Please wrap the package and return it under the tree with the tag attached to the OUTSIDE so the staff at St. Paul Health Center will be able to match your gift with an appropriately sized resident.

Please place these packages under the tree by Sunday, December 18th. Many thanks for your participation in this endeavor.

King Soopers Cards are Here!

Support the ministries of St. Paul at Kroger stores—just by making normal purchases!

How does it work?

1. Purchase a reloadable card in any amount between \$2.50 and \$500.
2. Make purchases as normal

3. Keep the same card & reload cards at your own pace at the Customer Service desk or checkout counter at your local King Soopers

Use King Soopers gift cards for all your purchases (including gas) and we get 5%.

To purchase, contact Father Don at donaldsutton@gmail.com

Cards with a zero balance will become inactive after 90 days and you will need to purchase a new one. Cards must be purchased from St. Paul and not directly from King Soopers.

December 2016

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|--|---|--|--|---|--|---|
| 4 Advent 2 8am Liturgy 9:15a Adult Forum, Coffee 9:30am Choir 10:30am Liturgy 11:45am Coffee | 5 11am-12noon Eva wedding 1-5pm Street Reach 6:30-8:30pm Rocky Mountain Ringers Rehearsal | 6 11:30 - 1pm Coalition for Sexual Offense Restoration Lunch | 7 10am-1pm Dark Horse Consort rehearsal 11am-12noon Staff meeting 5:45-6:45pm St. Paul Bell Choir rehearsal 7-9pm St Paul Choir rehearsal | 8 7:30-9:30pm Seicento Baroque Ensemble Concert featuring the Dark Horse Consort | 9 | 10 |
| 11 Advent 3 8am Liturgy 9:15a Adult Forum, Coffee 9:30am Choir 10:30am Liturgy 11:45am Coffee | 12 1-5pm Street Reach 6:30-8:30pm Rocky Mountain Ringers Rehearsal | 13 6:30pm Congregational Council meeting | 14 7:30-8:30pm Advent Prayer and Reflection | 15 5:45-6:45pm St. Paul Bell Choir rehearsal 7-9pm St Paul Choir rehearsal | 16 7:30pm Rocky Mountain Ringers concert | 17 8am-3pm Street Reach toy distribution 9am-12 St Paul Choir dress rehearsal 5-6pm Catholic Mass |
| 18 Advent 2 8am Liturg4 9:15a Adult Forum, Coffee 9:30am Choir 10:30am Liturgy 11:45am Coffee 4-6pm Columbine Chorale | 19 1-5pm Street Reach 6:30-8:30pm Rocky Mountain Ringers Rehearsal | 20 Newsletter deadline | 21 | 22 5:45-6:45pm St. Paul Bell Choir rehearsal 7-9pm St Paul Choir rehearsal | 23 | 24 Christmas Eve 4pm Family service 7pm Mass 9:30 Bell Choir warmup 10pm Choir warmup 10:30 pm Prelude 11pm Mass |
| 25 Christmas Day NO 8am SERVICE 9:15am Adult Forum 10:30am Liturgy 11:45am Coffee | 26 1-5pm Street Reach | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 5-6pm Catholic Mass/ New Year's Eve service |
| January 1 New Year's Day NO 8am SERVICE 9:15am Adult Forum 10:30am Liturgy 11:45am Coffee | 2 1-5pm Street Reach 6:30-8:30pm Rocky Mountain Ringers Rehearsal | 3 | 4 | 5 12-1pm Lunch Bunch, Helga's German Restaurant 4:45-6:45pm St. Paul Bell Choir rehearsal 7-9pm St Paul Choir | 6 | 7 5-6pm Catholic Mass |