

Blessings for 2018 in the name of Jesus Christ who came to save us!

I've encountered dozens of suggestions for new year's resolutions from advise columnists in newspapers, from the radio airwaves and discussions about what people are resolved to do in 2018. One writer concludes her advice giving with the final suggestion: "believe in something bigger than yourself because research shows that people who have connected with a spiritual belief cope much better in difficult times." We do live in a world of competing values and conflicting loyalties. We Christians follow Jesus; we believe in someone bigger than ourselves-the creator of life, the one who saves us from ourselves and the world. We cling to the cross of Jesus. It is Jesus who teaches us how we celebrate the great times and cope with the not so nice times. Our campers learn a song that I hope remains in their hearts forever, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness."

We need to constantly orient our lives towards God by what we do and say and think. That is why we have weekly worship, Sunday school classes, future bible studies and many service ministries. The discussions surrounding our worship and learning and ministries involve the struggle we have orienting ourselves always towards God and God's will for us and help us connect with God's will for us.

We usually begin worship with confession because we know that we are not seeking the kingdom of God but seeking the kingdom of material wealth and social status. We begin the year as we recall the visit of the magi who were seeking the Christ child and we will remember our baptism. We will install our new council members and accept new members in January. In baptism we are claimed by God who will never abandon us and will always love us with a love that never lets us go. That, my friends, is GREAT news! Such knowledge helps us through the times that are challenging. Such knowledge causes us to rejoice in Jesus, our savior.

During 2018 each of us can do more to get connected with God. Begin by believing and acting on the hymn we sang during Christmas season, "Come and worship Christ the new born king." Connect and reconnect with the faithful folk at St. Paul. Invite family and friends to worship and fellowship, to Sunday school and Bible study. When we seek first God's kingdom, life has a new orientation and priorities fall into God's perspective.

We at St. Paul look forward to being with you as together we continue to connect with Jesus, the merciful one who is bigger than us. God's blessings on each of you as we embark on a new year, new challenges, and new causes for celebration.

Shalom,

Pastor Bev +



Dear members of St. Paul's congregation,

I hope all of you had a wonderful Christmas. I spent Christmas with Bob, his brother, our nephews and their families in Florida. I truly miss spending Christmas at home and especially attending Christmas Eve Service with all of you here at St. Paul's. I may not have been with you in person at the service but was with you in spirit.

Thank you so much to all who helped decorate the church for Christmas. The turn out was small, but we had a great time and got everything done. We will meet at Z-Town for breakfast at 8:00 then go to the church to take the decorations down on Saturday, January 13.

Thank you so much to all who donated gifts for Creek Meadows and the food cupboard. You are certainly a generous congregation.

Our annual congregational meeting will be Sunday, January 28th, following our church service and lunch. Please try to attend this important meeting. We have a lot to discuss and would like many opinions not just a few.

Sheets will be sent around for Ushers, Greeters, Lectors, Bell Ringers, acolytes, and tray holders at the congregational luncheon. If you would like to sign up for any of these and are not going to be at the congregational meeting, please call Colleen to sign up.

The Willing Workers will have a Soup and Sandwich meal in February from 4 PM till 7 PM. More on this and a date in our February Newsletter.

At our December council meeting new officers were elected:

President – Linda Flora, Vice President – Thom Cipro, Secretary-Nancy Williamson

2018 Council Members:

John Alexander, Tim Brosenitsch, Thom Cipro, Linda Flora, Cindy Loveridge, Jeff Miller, Becky Tomei, Mary Albert Tomei and Nancy Williamson. Please give the newly elected members and the Council your support.

This is my last newsletter as Council President. I would like to thank all of you for your support in the last 6 years I served on council. If you are asked to run for Council, please do so. It is a good experience.



Marty

SUNDAY SCHOOL HAPPENINGS

Our youth [Allison Alexander, Ayla Alexander, Riley Lang, Reagan Lang, Brielle Martin, Abigail Muthler, Isabella Muthler, Emerson Pepper, Kennedy Pepper, and Lexi Pepper] certainly demonstrated that they are Christian leaders for today as they led worship for the 4th Sunday of Advent on December 24. They shared their ministry of music and leadership as they read scriptures, ushered and delighted us by playing a variety of musical instruments. We look forward for future Youth Sundays and hope some of our young musicians will volunteer for preludes, offertories and postludes in the future. Following worship that Sunday morning, many of our youth gathered gifts for Creek Meadows and went on their way searching for the names of persons who would receive gifts. Our thanks to all who generously purchased and wrapped gifts for our friends down the road. The residents especially enjoyed the carol singing. Many folks with memory loss suddenly became alert as they heard familiar Christmas songs. January 28th will be the next Sunday when youth will be our worship leaders.

Our thanks to Lexi Pepper for volunteering to be a Sunday School teacher for our pre-schoolers. We anticipate having things arranged to begin this valuable ministry by January 21st. We need to rearrange a space, and equip the space with age appropriate things so our young members can hear the word of God with stories, songs and activities which they can enjoy. Watch for further information in future bulletins.



Only new prayer requests will be in the weekly bulletins.

CONTINUED PRAYER REQUESTS: Tom Baker, Brad Bartley, Ann Boben, Landon Brewer, Carol Bulger, Nancy Bulger, Samantha Bulger, Nellie Chmara, Kim Christy, Barb Cvetich, Jake Dietrich, Rick Dickerson, Don, David English, Mark Fox, Bernie Fedorka, Barbara Frantz, Brett Greenhill, Andrienne Haegg, Cindi Hunter, William Loveridge, Anita Lynch, Bobbie Marchlenski, Nolan Nachriener, Darlene Neibar, Terry Oakes, Cheryl Oday, Verna Patscko, Lois Peeples, Mark Pollack, Jim Rape, Erin Roman, Dawn Swidorsky, Louise Spithaler, George Stout, Dr. Mark Tarter, Bud Weber, John Wherry, David Williamson, Nancy Wilson, Lilly Wolfe, Ruth Wolfe and Ron Zinkham.

Please keep the church updated on your prayer request. All updates and request may be emailed to splcofzelie@gmail.com Also if you would like to be notified of any needed prayers, please email the church office, with your email address.

EPIPHANY SEASON

January 6th is celebrated as the **Epiphany** [or manifestation] of our Lord. We celebrate the revelation of Christ to the Gentiles or magi. Strangers found and worshipped the holy family at the house in Bethlehem where they were living. The Holy Family welcomed these strangers. After these strangers from the east departed, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph saying, "Get up, take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt." King Herod planned to slaughter every boy child under 2 years of age so that no king of the Jews would be a threat to his reign.

Such a relocation can be frightening to a family, especially to children. A recent article in the *Christian Century* [Dec. 20, 2017] was offered as a sign of hope for 2018. It is printed below as a way to approach new ideas and strange people so that such encounters are not fearful.

Being curious and kind: Celeste Ng's six year old son has a soft and kind heart—it's "huge," according to Mom. This little guy is so sensitive that he skips over the pages in children's books where someone gets hurt. He retreats when faced with trouble. Ng knows she can't give him a thick and leathery shell for protection, even if she wants to on certain days. She's also aware that fear has a way of convincing us that hardness is somehow good. Fear prompts people to hide their vulnerability inside shells and behind wall.

Ng tells her boy of the good things that shells and walls keep out, reminding him of their family motto: "Be kind, be curious, be helpful." The boy can't figure out why *curious* is in the mix. "Because being curious," says Mom, "is admitting that you don't know, but also that you want to know....that people you don't know are worth knowing, that they have something to teach you. That learning about them—that encountering new ideas—doesn't threaten you, it enriches you.....That you approach the world as a trove of things to take in, rather than things you frantically, fearfully wall out." —PWW

MEALS ON WHEELS

Our turn to help provide desserts will be January 22 through February 2. Cheryl Whitehouse has the sign up sheet or call the office at 724-452-8832 if you are able to provide a dessert. Needed each day are 30 regular (pies, cakes, cookies, cupcakes, donuts or anything baked) plus pudding, jello, canned or fresh fruit. In addition there are 10 diabetic desserts (sugar free jello or sugar free pudding or anything baked with splenda) plus canned or fresh fruit. Desserts can be delivered to English Lutheran from 7:00 AM to 9:00 AM. If you are unable to drop off your desserts by 9:00 in the morning, don't let that stop you from volunteering. Arrangements can be made to help you get your desserts there on time.

2018

JANUARY



ASSISTING MINISTER: Marty Goetz
LECTOR: Jen McMurray
USHERS: Mike and Alicia Wilson
GREETERS: John and Barbara Bulger
BELL RINGER: Mike Wilson

Office hours: Mon. - Wed. Fr. 9:00-12:00 splcozle@gmail.com www.splcoz.com 724-452-8832

SUNDAY
OFFICE HOURS: 9:00-11:00

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
06	07	08	09	10	11	12
05	04	03	02	01	00	31
30	29	28	27	26	25	24
23	22	21	20	19	18	17
16	15	14	13	12	11	10
09	08	07	06	05	04	03
02	01	00	31	30	29	28
21	20	19	18	17	16	15
14	13	12	11	10	09	08
07	06	05	04	03	02	01
31	30	29	28	27	26	25
24	23	22	21	20	19	18
17	16	15	14	13	12	11
10	09	08	07	06	05	04
03	02	01	31	30	29	28
27	26	25	24	23	22	21
20	19	18	17	16	15	14
13	12	11	10	09	08	07
06	05	04	03	02	01	31



9:00 Sunday School
10:15 Worship with Holy Communion
 Installation of Council
 5:00 Confirmation @ St Paul

9:00 Sunday School
10:15 Worship with Holy Communion - John Bulger will lead us in worship

9:00 Sunday School
10:15 Worship

9:00 Sunday School
10:15 Worship with Holy Communion - Youth Sunday
 11:30 Annual Congregational Meeting and Lunch
 5:00 Confirmation @ English

10:00 Annual Report info due

10:00 February newsletter info due

Provide desserts for Meals On Wheels. Please see Cheryl Whitehouse with any questions or to sign up for a day.

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8:00 Meet for Breakfast at Z Town Cafe
 9:00 Take down Christmas Decorations