

SAINT PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

# MESSENGER

JUNE 2021



A huge and heartfelt  
**THANK YOU** ☆  
to everyone who helped make  
the Craft Fair & Lawn Fête a success.  
It was the first major public event in  
Dansville since the pandemic and gave  
the community a chance to celebrate even  
when the rest of the customary festival  
was cancelled. We look forward to an even  
better time next year when the whole  
Dogwood Festival returns in its fulness.





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The Proverb bears repeating (and I have): where there is no vision, the people perish. (Prov. 29.18, KJV). Moses led the people in the wilderness guided by the vision of the Promised Land. Jesus set his face to Jerusalem and certain suffering guided by the vision of the Kingdom of God. The Apostles ventured into new territory, facing all manner of hardship, guided by the vision of the Risen Christ. Early churches dreamed of the New Jerusalem that combined the Garden of Eden and God's holy city in which Christ himself was the light.

All of these visions have one thing in common: they require looking to the future, not to the past. Jesus emphasized this when he said "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:62).

Now to this point, everything written here is familiar to you. I have said it before in sermons and messages like this one. The difference now is that we can with reasonable confidence say we are on our way out of pandemic life and will be resuming more and more of our in-person church life. At the same time, we are confronted with the stark reality of church in the modern era: prior ways of coming together and "doing church" have not worked very well for quite awhile, and the pandemic may well have finished them off.

This makes looking ahead more important than ever before, and it makes the vision we have all the more important. The challenge, then, is with the vision itself. We can say "Promised Land," or "Kingdom of God," or "Risen Christ," but if we are not clear on what is meant by those, it almost does not matter, for we still will labor without a real vision.

Moreover, any vision for the future cannot look like the past. This is particularly challenging. When we look ahead and see a troublesome future, we might be tempted to look to the past - specifically when our churches were full - for answers. To do so would be disastrous: doubling down on familiar patterns of church life without discerning our vision in the here and now and the needs in the world that God so loves would result in a great expenditure of energy and resources for no gain.

Months ago, I wrote that we cannot return to the same church after the lockdown that we left at the beginning of it. There were plenty of nods when I mentioned this to individuals, but here is what that means: we cannot return to the same Sunday school, the same youth group, the same adult education, the same committees, or even the same worship (and I say that as a lover of traditional worship). Rather, we must discern how to be in the here and now, in light of the pandemic and the swirling struggles of our national life.

So it is, I invite you to a summer season of discernment. I urge you to be in prayer as to what God is calling you as individuals and us as a church to be right now. Toward the end of Summer we will begin laying down plans for the Fall, but those plans will amount to little if our discernment is not in the right place.

As to vision, I remain convinced that the visions on which the church was built - chief among them the New Jerusalem - are operative for us, but how we apply them now cannot be the same as how previous generations have done so. We cannot traffic on authority, cultural pressure, guilt, or habit. At the same time, we have access to communications and other technology that are wholly unprecedented. There has never been a greater need than now for a new way of sharing the Christian vision, but there has never been more opportunity than now to do so.

Since more and more of us are vaccinated, I invite you to contact me directly so we can consider our vision together, and look for the July Messenger to have word on some additional summer gathering opportunities for St. Paul's.

Pastor Ewert

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## A CALL TO SERVICE

If you would like to serve as an usher, counter, worship minister, or reader, or wish to sponsor altar flowers, please sign up at the bulletin board in the hallway.

## ***In Our Prayers***

Carson Mountzouros  
Ginger Buck  
Carol Pfutner  
David Smith  
Lindsey Johnson  
June Collier  
Sue Collier  
Mary Sahrle  
Robert Brydges  
Don Cuddeback  
Alice Burdick  
Judy Bortle  
Richard & Marilyn Lemen

David Stead  
Pat & Wayne Hunt  
Nancy Golden-Gulino  
Kay Howe

\* If you have a prayer request, please notify the office. \*

## *June Birthdays*

6/5 Ursala Kroh  
6/8 Susan Collier  
6/10 Franklin Faulds  
6/18 Ginger Buck

## SERVING IN THE MILITARY

- ★ Andrew M. Mountzouros  
*United States Navy*
- ★ Jordan C. Camacho  
*United States Navy*



"But let justice roll on like a river,  
righteousness like a never-failing stream!"  
Amos 5:24

The UPSTATE NEW YORK WORLD HUNGER TEAM has challenged each congregation to raise money for life-saving, life-changing access to clean water for people in the US and around the world! Together, our trickles of effort will create a mighty stream of justice! We are collecting donations between now and the Synod Assembly June 3-5. Please make your check out to St. Paul's, with "World Hunger Challenge" in the memo line.

# JUNE CALENDAR

## STANDING SCHEDULE

<u>DAY/DATE/TIME</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>NOTES</u>
Sunday 9 <sup>AM</sup>	Worship	Communion on 1st & 3rd Sundays
Tue. - Thur., 8-11 <sup>AM</sup>	Office Hours	The Office will be closed the week of 6/8.
Tue. - Thur., 10-1 <sup>PM</sup>	Summer Office Hours will begin June 22nd.	

The Adult Forum is taking a summer vacation and will return in September.

## DATES TO REMEMBER

<u>DAY/DATE/TIME</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>NOTES</u>
June 3-5	Synod Assembly	Includes the Election of a Bishop
Tues., 6/15 at 11AM	Men's Fellowship (New!)	Sunrise Restaurant
Tues., 6/15	Council Meeting	Conference Room



Family Laundromat  
20 Franklin St.

6/7 4-7 PM  
6/12 8:30-11:30 AM  
6/21 4-7 PM  
6/26 8:30-11:30 AM

### *A Prayer for the Election of the next Synod Bishop*

*Eternal God, shepherd and guide, in your mercy give your Church in this synod a shepherd after your own heart who will walk in your ways, and with loving care watch over your people. Give us a leader of vision and a teacher of your truth; that your Church be built up and your name gloried; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*



### Saint Paul's Lutheran Church

21 Clara Barton St.  
Dansville, NY 14437  
(585) 335-5260  
[stpaulsdansville.org](http://stpaulsdansville.org)  
[fb.com/stpaulsdansville](https://fb.com/stpaulsdansville)

### PASTOR

The Rev. J. Eric Thompson  
(585) 447-3623  
[pastor@stpaulsdansville.org](mailto:pastor@stpaulsdansville.org)

### STAFF

Katrina Macaluso, Office  
[admin@stpaulsdansville.org](mailto:admin@stpaulsdansville.org)  
Sue Collier, Musician  
Marilyn Robin, Choir Director  
Kim Pragle, Sexton

### COUNCIL

Ann Myers, President  
Tina Button, Vice-President  
Penny Leven, Secretary  
Geraldine Long, Treasurer  
Paul Button, Property  
Heather Robin  
Bob Whiteman