



SAINT PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

MESSENGER

ADVENT-CHRISTMAS 2022



THANKSGIVING CELEBRATION



Food & Fellowship
Saturday, Nov. 19th, 11:30-1:00

No Charge

St. Peter's Episcopal Church
25 Clara Barton St. Dansville, NY 14437

A Service of Thanksgiving



20 NOVEMBER 2022
AT 3:00 P.M.
ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Offering to be collected for Laundry Love



Family Laundromat 20 Franklin St.

Nov. 19	8:30 - 11:30
Nov. 21	3:30 - 6:30
Dec. 3	8:30 - 11:30
Dec. 5	3:30 - 6:30
Dec. 17	8:30 - 11:30
Dec. 19	3:30 - 6:30

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

(1 Thess. 5:16-18)

After nearly 18 years of ordained ministry, I attended a retreat for clergy that is intended to provide opportunities for reflection, discernment, and consideration of the future. Most other clergy present with the same or greater number of years in service had attended one or more of these retreats. Other first-timers had fewer than ten years of service. Suffice to say, I had taken my time doing this, because I dislike *going* on retreat. That said, when I finally go, I do get something out of it, and I'd like to share some of what I got.

1. Every corner of the church has been touched by the pandemic. Indeed, the fatigue of congregations and those who serve them was a recurring theme. So if you find yourself tired and anxious, know you have lots of company.
2. Among even large churches, relevance is a concern. Leaders and congregations cannot take the classical ways of connecting with others for granted, but no single solution emerged.
3. The healthiest energy I encountered came from leaders of congregations that were engaged in outreach and service.

Linked to each of these was the theme of the week: everyone needs a *rule of life* to sustain them in a Christian life of service, especially in frustrating times. You have probably heard this term before. A rule of life is the method by which someone prioritizes their needs and duties to God and others. Oftentimes we associate them with religious orders like monks and nuns, but *everyone benefits from a rule of life!* Unfortunately, most people - including most Christians - do not have one. So we are caught in perpetual reaction - survival mode! - rather than thriving.

I encourage everyone to develop a rule of life. Nobody is obligated to replicate anyone else's

rule of life, but I believe we all stand to benefit from considering certain categories from which we might develop rules. I will be preaching about this between now and the end of the calendar year, but I want to offer some thoughts now, sharing some - but not all - of the rule I'm sorting out for myself.

- * Thanks. Begin with gratitude. We all exist because God created us and restored us through Christ. On our worst day, we are beloved and redeemed. Let gratitude for that inform how we see the rest of our lives.
- * Pray. Take at least one time a day to pray. There are no rules as to what to pray for, but if you struggle with what to say consider starting with the Lord's prayer. There are also plenty of guides for individual prayer and devotion from which you can draw.
- * Learn. Read from the Bible, or a devotional book. It can be just a chapter a day. It will create space in your mind for discernment, and expose you to fresh thinking. This is a big help if you find yourself in a rut.
- * Peace. Practice kindness and curiosity. Err on the side of mercy over judgment. Try to find some quiet every day.
- * Imagine. We exist because God dreamed of something instead of nothing. We have hope because of the resurrection and the in-breaking Kingdom of God. Even as the world despairs, we are called to a holy optimism. So imagine the possibilities of the Kingdom of God on earth, and what role you might have as the hands and feet of Jesus Christ in this beloved world.

My rules need not be yours. Today's rules need not be tomorrow's if they are not serving you. Yet they can be a source of strength as we together navigate this taxing time. And together we will continue the rule of hearing and responding to the Word of God proclaimed, and sharing in the Lord's Supper.

- *Pr. Eric*

Gifts of Comfort & Joy

Advent is a season of hope; *hope* that comes from God's promises to us; *hope* that comes from God choosing to be one of us; *hope* that calls us to execute "justice for the oppressed" and "Give food to the Hungry". God's promise to us today is a renewed future of justice and security. God invites us to participate in building that future in big and small ways.

The Synod's Hunger Justice Team is offering congregations an opportunity to help build that future by raising \$400 or more during the Advent season to be used for Disaster Relief and Campus Ministry Feeding Ministries.

The disasters worldwide, resulting from wars and natural disasters, have left millions homeless, without water, power and access to food. Communities of poverty are particularly hard hit.

Locally our Synod's five campus ministry programs provide food, spiritual and physical for students. Students come from many different backgrounds, some have limited resources and don't always eat well. Most hunger for a community, a place to belong, a place where they know they are accepted for who they are. Campus Ministries provide that place.

Your congregation is invited to use the ELCA Advent Hunger resources and to raise \$400 for Hunger during the Advent Season. Send your gift, whatever it might be, to the Synod. Fifty percent of all gifts received will go directly to ELCA World Hunger/Disaster relief; and 50% will be divided among the Synod's campus feeding ministries in Buffalo, Rochester, Ithaca, Syracuse and Albany.

Checks can be made out to St. Paul's, with "Hunger Justice Team" in the memorandum line.



Poinsettia Order Form



Please complete this form and return it to the office by December 13.
Price per poinsettia is \$10.

Your name: _____

Number of Poinsettias: _____

- In memory of _____
- In honor of _____
- To the Glory of God.
- Food Pantry.

IN OUR PRAYERS

Judy Babcock
Lindsey Backus
Carolyn Baker
Jan Blum
Ginger Buck
Maya Buckley
Rodney Button
Bill Caton
June Collier
Don & Madge Cuddeback
Kim Greene
Michael
Jeannie
Kay Howe
Dick & Marilyn Lemen
Jim Lewis

Michelle Mackey
William Maher
Bob Minemier
Barb Mitchell
Jim Rex
Dick Sahrle
Mary Sahrle
Chris
Bill Shaver
David Smith
Chris
Jim Thompson
Jim Wagner
Peter Vogt
+ Betty Minemier
+ Jan Hawk

November & December Birthdays

Jim Wagner	Nov 1
June Collier	Nov 24
Wilma Traxler	Nov 29
Carolynn Baker	Dec 6
Ann Myers	Dec 20

SERVING IN THE MILITARY

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

The Longest Night

"Blue Christmas"

Honoring Darkness + Embracing Light

*Wednesday, Dec. 21st, 7pm
St. Peter's Episcopal Church*

DAMA DANSVILLE AREA
MINISTERIAL
ASSOCIATION
COMMUNICATE • COORDINATE • COLLABORATE



*Christmas Eve
Festive Service
Saturday,
December 24th
6pm.*

Saint Paul's Lutheran Church

21 Clara Barton Street + Dansville, NY 14437
585-335-5260 + stpaulsdansville.org