



The Messenger

January 2021

**St. Paul's
Evangelical
Lutheran
Church**

3295 S. Union Ave.
Alliance, Ohio 44601
330-823-2285

FROM PASTOR MUSE

There are many things that we can learn from the past year. We have all been given opportunities to advance ourselves in areas we never imagined. Remote learning, online church, wearing a mask, constant reminders to washing our hands, and social distancing are just a few of the many things we had to learn in 2020. We carry these lessons into 2021 as we plot a course for the next year. The biggest lesson that we have had to learn and the one that will create the foundation for our movement forward is flexibility. We have had to learn to be flexible in the midst of all that we face, and the more we embrace flexibility, the stronger we will be in the coming year.

Every day is different in these times, more so than ever before. We are daily looking at the numbers, body count, infection rate, spread, calendar proximity to large events, along with a myriad of other factors that will direct our decisions. These factors change daily, so what worked yesterday may not work today, but it may work again tomorrow. We are engaged in a dance that causes us to continually move in different directions.

The church is no different at this time.

As individual believers and as a community, we continue to be called into flexibility as we face this current situation. We saw this flexibility already play out in our collective interest. After the initial shut-down, we came back together for a brief period. Then we saw the rise in positive cases, the county going into the purple, and an increased concern after Thanksgiving and leading to Christmas. This brought us to the place of staying apart and doing our work remotely. This was a wise and necessary decision at the time.

Now we are planning on coming back together again. The case numbers seemed to have stabilized, though not good by any stretch. Large gatherings are in our review mirror, so beginning on Sunday, January 10, we will come back together for in-person worship. The same format and times will be used as last time we came back together, 8:30 am and 11:00 am, with the 11:00 am service being live-streamed. We will attempt to bring forward faithful and meaningful worship in the current situation. We have had to be flexible in how we present worship, as the guidelines and expectations have changed. We will continue to need a

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Meditation Online

Thursday, January 7,
at 10:30 am &
Tuesday, January 19,
at 7:00 pm.

There is no experience needed. Wear comfortable clothes and enjoy a time of peace, quiet, and centering.

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spirit of flexibility. We come back together, knowing that we have not returned to where we were in 2019.

We will also need to embrace this flexibility as we move forward in watching all the presented factors. There could be a point where things ramp up again, and the numbers get out of control. If this happens, then we will once again need to consider being remote only. I hope and pray this does not occur. But knowing the course of this virus, we should be prepared to be flexible in our work together.

Let us embrace the flexibility necessary to navigate this time in our lives. God is with us in this and is active in the flexibility of the circumstances.

Peace to you,
Pastor Muse

FROM PASTOR THOMPSON

Are you ready for 2020 to be over? There is something about the start of a new calendar year that gives us the idea that we have a clean slate, a chance for something new. Our society encourages us to use the turning of the calendar to make resolutions and potentially reinvent ourselves, our careers, or other places in our lives

Were you aware that about 50% of Americans make New Year resolutions but statistically, only 10% keep them? (*Why we make (and break) New Year's resolutions, and 4 tips to help you achieve your goals*, Western Connecticut Health Network, December 07, 2020)

I have watched many people start a resolution (for the New Year or at any time) and find themselves frustrated when they cannot fulfill them. Does this mean we shouldn't make resolutions?

No! It is a great way to practice grace and forgiveness with yourself and an opportunity for self-examination. As Christians, we have self-examination as part of our Lenten practice. We also practice self-examination during confession and forgiveness.

What we don't do well is offer grace and forgiveness of ourselves. Sometimes we are not even willing to accept God's grace and forgiveness. Maybe because we feel unworthy, did not try hard enough; you could probably create your own list.

One of the joys we have as Baptized Children of God is that each moment of each day is a chance to start again. We are not captive to a calendar or clock to tell us when we can reestablish a resolution. We are "born anew" in baptism. We are not trapped by our sin to an old way of life. God invites us to see each moment of each day as a new opportunity to try again. To leave the "Old Adam," our sinful self, behind and "put on Christ." To acknowledge our sins and failings and begin again.

Whether you make formal resolutions, create a dream board, write your hopes and plans in a journal, or do none of the above. You are given each moment of every day to walk as a disciple of Christ. A claimed child of God. You can go in a new direction at any time.

Will your "Old Adam" try to trip you up? Yep, every time. But the grace and love of God are with you. You already have access to God's grace. Practice grace and forgiveness to yourself and continue in the actions that bring you health, life, and share the Good News of God in the world.

Happy New Year!
Pastor Diana Thompson

ADULT EDUCATION AND FELLOWSHIP

Christian Education

The Gospel of Luke

Sundays at 9:00 am online

The study will be on Pastor Diana's YouTube channel. A link also will be posted on our social media and website.

Wednesday Bible Study

The Book of Revelation

10:00 am online

You can find this study on Pastor Tim's YouTube channel and a link is posted on our social media and website.

Adult Check-in

Thursday evenings at 9:30 pm.

Pastor Tim and Pastor Diana are hosting a video conference for any adults who want to chat with other adults. We have had great conversation and laughter. If you would like to join us please email Pastor Diana, TheRev.Thompson@gmail.com. She will send you the information you need to join in!



Adult Education

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Encourage one another and build each other up. 1Thessalonians 5:11

Greetings to all-

Happy New Year!! Hope all is well with everyone!!! As we enter January, we will be starting our take-home lessons once again!

We will be offering a Kids Church lesson to our youth each Sunday during January! Each session will provide a Bible story and a hands-on STEM activity for the children to complete with their families! All materials for the month will be provided. You can pick up your packet starting Saturday, January 9, 2021! Each lesson will be posted to our Christian Education Facebook page! I am excited to offer a weekly fun family activity for all of you to complete on your schedule!

DID YOU KNOW?

Members of St. Paul's who are now gone have left a treasure of items that soon are forgotten after they have passed on and time flies by.

Helen Marie Wagner's estate paid for our wonderful metal roof. The roof is estimated to last 50 years, a generous gift indeed! A life member of St. Paul's, she taught

If you are unable to pick up materials, please reach out to make arrangements for drop off! I am more than happy to help get all families the materials needed!

Hope everyone has a safe and blessed month!!

With Gods Love,
Brianne Black

Sunday school and was a member of Chancel Choir. She graduated from Alliance High School, Mount Union College and had a master's from Kent State. She taught at Stanton Junior High. She died in 2008 at the age of 90.

Let us hold the memory of those who were so generous to the church in years past.

MUSIC & WORSHIP

We are providing the following worship opportunities:

Sundays at 8:30 am and 11 am—In-person with Holy Communion. Livestream on Facebook at 11:00 am.

Wednesdays at 12 pm—Livestream on Facebook a Service of Word and Prayer.

Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays at 12 pm—Pastor Muse or Pastor Diana share a devotional or inspirational message.

If you are willing to lector please contact Gina Falconer or Pastor Muse. You can lector for one or both service.

We thank Gina Falconer, Director of Music & Worship and Kathy Sloan, Organist for continuing to provide leadership for

NOTE FOR ONLINE WORSHIP

We continue to offer online worship every Sunday at 11:00 am.

Communion wafers are placed by the office door for those who wish to pick them up to use for communion. The wafers are out on Fridays and Saturdays from 10:30 am to 2:00 pm. The service outline is posted on Pastor Muse's blog site each week, and the link is published on the Facebook page. This allows members who are worshipping at home to access the service outline and follow along accordingly.

*If anyone would be interested in dedicating the monthly Eternal Flame for 2021 please call the church office.
330-823-2285*

The Eternal Flame is given to the glory of God in memory of our parents, Marion and Jeanette Ruff and Jacob and Jocelyn Wolfe by John and Karen Wolfe.



Happy January Birthday to You!

May you enjoy many more and may God bless each one of you in many ways as you enjoy another year in God's grace.

3 - Brian Huffman	12 - Stacey Russell	21 - Ed Stockli	28 - Haley Starvaggi
4 - Jane Holbrook	16 - Diane Green	22 - Erik Bergmann	30 - Diana Cullen
4 - Ericka Linger	16 - Ben White	23 - Korie Ziemke	31 - Amy Carver
4 - Lauren Siegfried	17 - Derek Dimit	25 - Jeff Wallace	
5 - Linda Baker	17 - Bonnie Mohr	25 - Toni George	
7 - Micheal Anne Swain	19 - Tom Siegfried, Jr.	25 - Jon Hunt	
8 - Nicole Marschinke	19 - Jarrod Webb	26 - Shirley Kline	
11 - Zonia Miller	19 - Brandon Hunt	26 - Elaine Schroeder	
11 - Joseph Caner	21 - Karen Rice	27 - Dr. Mark Hostettler	
11 - Madelyn Bailey	21 - JoAnne Venables	27 - Susan Molnar	



JANUARY 2021—The Word of God in Worship

January 3, 2021 SECOND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS INTRODUCTION

Within the gospel reading's profound words lies the simple message that God is revealed in a human person. Though we may try to understand how the Word existed with God from the beginning of time, the wonder we celebrate at Christmas is that the Word continues to dwell among us. Christ comes among us in the gathered assembly, the scriptures, the waters of new birth, and the bread and the wine. Through these ordinary gifts we receive the fullness of God's grace and truth.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

READINGS AND PSALM Jeremiah 31:7-14

Sirach 24:1-12 (Alternate) Psalm 147:12-20

Worship the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise your God, O Zion. (Ps. 147:12), Wisdom 10:15-21 (Alternate)

We sing, O Lord, to your holy name. (Wis. 10:20)

Ephesians 1:3-14, John 1:[1-9] 10-18

January 10, 2021 BAPTISM OF OUR LORD INTRODUCTION

Our re-creation in baptism is an image of the Genesis creation, where the Spirit of God moved over the waters. Both Mark's gospel and the story in Acts make clear that it is the Spirit's movement that distinguishes Jesus' baptism from John's. The Spirit has come upon us as upon Jesus and the Ephesians, calling us God's beloved children and setting us on Jesus' mission to re-create the world in the image of God's vision of justice and peace.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Holy God, creator of light and giver of goodness, your voice moves over the waters. Immerse us in your grace, and transform us by your Spirit, that we may follow after your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

READINGS AND PSALM Genesis 1:1-5

Psalm 29, *The voice of the LORD is upon the waters. (Ps. 29:3)*

Acts 19:1-7, Mark 1:4-11

January 17, 2021 SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY / LECTIONARY 2 INTRODUCTION

All the baptized have a calling in God's world. God calls not just pastors and deacons but also the youngest child, like Samuel. The story of the calling of Nathanael plays with the idea of place. Nathanael initially dismisses Jesus because he comes from Nazareth. But where we come from isn't important; it's where—or rather whom—we come to. Jesus refers to Jacob, who had a vision in a place he called "the house of God, and . . . the gate of heaven" (Gen. 28:17). Jesus says he himself is the place where Nathanael will meet God.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Thanks be to you, Lord Christ, most merciful redeemer, for the countless blessings and benefits you give. May we know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day praising you, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

READINGS AND PSALM 1 Samuel 3:1-10 [11-20]

Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18 *You have searched me out and known me. (Ps. 139:1)* 1 Corinthians 6:12-20, John 1:43-51

January 24, 2021 THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY / LECTIONARY 3 INTRODUCTION

As we continue through the time after Epiphany, stories of the call to discipleship show us the implications of our baptismal calling to show Christ to the world. Jesus begins proclaiming the good news and calling people to repentance right after John the Baptist is arrested for preaching in a similar way. Knowing that John was later executed, we see at the very outset the cost of discipleship. Still, the two sets of brothers leave everything they have known and worked for all their lives to follow Jesus and fish for people.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, by grace alone you call us and accept us in your service. Strengthen us by your Spirit, and make us worthy of your call, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

READINGS AND PSALM Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Psalm 62:5-12, *God alone is my rock and my salvation. (Ps. 62:6),* 1 Corinthians 7:29-31, Mark 1:14-20

January 31, 2021 FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY / LECTIONARY 4 INTRODUCTION

In Deuteronomy God promises to raise up a prophet like Moses, who will speak for God; in Psalm 111 God shows the people the power of God's works. For the church these are ways of pointing to the unique authority people sensed in Jesus' actions and words. We encounter that authority in God's word, around which we gather, the word that prevails over any lesser spirit that would claim power over us, freeing us to follow Jesus.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Compassionate God, you gather the whole universe into your radiant presence and continually reveal your Son as our Savior. Bring wholeness to all that is broken and speak truth to us in our confusion, that all creation will see and know your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

READINGS AND PSALM Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Psalm 111 *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom. (Ps. 111:10)* 1 Corinthians 8:1-13, Mark 1:21-28

January 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				3	1 Church Office Closed	2
9:30 am The Nicene Creed Online 11:00 am Worship (online)	4	5 12:00 pm Daily Devotions Online 5:30 pm Girl Scouts (zoom) 7:00 pm Worship & Music Committee	6 10:00 am Adult Bible Study Online 12:00 pm Midweek Worship Online	7 10:30 am Meditation with Pastor online 12:00 pm Daily Devotions Online 9:30 pm Adult Check-in	8 12:00 pm Daily Devotions Online	9
10 8:30 am Worship (in-person) 9:00 am The Gospel of Luke Online 9:30 am The Nicene Creed Online 11:00 am Worship (in-person and online)	11 7:00 pm Grief Support	12 12:00 pm Daily Devotions Online 7:00 pm Church Council	13 10:00 am Adult Bible Study Online 12:00 pm Midweek Worship Online	14 12:00 pm Daily Devotions Online 9:30 pm Adult Check-in	15 12:00 pm Daily Devotions Online	16
17 8:30 am Worship (in-person and online) 9:00 am The Gospel of Luke Online 11:00 am Worship (in-person and online) Newsletter Items Due	18	19 12:00 pm Daily Devotions Online 5:30 pm Girl Scouts 7:00 pm Meditation with Pastor online	20 10:00 am Adult Bible Study Online 12:00 pm Midweek Worship Online	21 12:00 pm Daily Devotions Online 9:30 pm Adult Check-in	22 12:00 pm Daily Devotions Online	23
24 8:30 am Worship (in-person) 9:00 am The Gospel of Luke Online 11:00 am Worship (in-person and online)	25 7:00 pm Grief Support	26 12:00 pm Daily Devotions Online	27 10:00 am Adult Bible Study Online 12:00 pm Midweek Worship Online	28 12:00 pm Daily Devotions Online 9:30 pm Adult Check-in	29 12:00 pm Daily Devotions Online	30
31 8:30 am Worship (in-person) 9:00 am The Gospel of Luke Online 11:00 am Worship (in-person and online)						

HOSPITAL ADMITTANCE

The Covid-19 pandemic has made hospital visitation difficult. However, we still want to be part of the healing process. The hospitals are no longer informing churches if a member has been admitted. If you or a loved one is in the hospital please inform the church office or the pastor, so that we can be part of the healing.

REQUEST FROM QUILTERS

The quilters are in need of sheets for quilt backing, if you are getting rid of any sheets they would very much appreciate anyone donating them to make their quilts.

FLEECE BLANKET PROJECT

Thank you to everyone who donated to the blanket project.

I took them to Altercare of Alliance. Due to changes in visitation, they will not have the annual Christmas party. When they saw the blankets the staff members were teary-eyed. The residents will have the “hug” of a warm blanket and the cheer of the bright colors and patterns. Thank you and blessings. *Gayle Fiegenschuh*

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

During this time of not being together face to face, opportunities to give to others is a small way to make us feel like our church family has a purpose.

What a fantastic response we had to the article in last month's Messenger asking for mittens, hats, and food items for the Salvation Army. Due to your generosity, we collected were well over 200 items. They were delivered on December 16.

Once again, we have been made aware of a need in the **Alliance City Schools for hygiene items**. These items are distributed as needed. **We will collect toothpaste, toothbrushes, lip balm, shampoo, conditioner, and body wash in January.**

As in December, please bring your donations to the church Monday-Saturday during the hours of 9 am – 2 pm. If you cannot get them inside the building, boxes will be available on the bench beside the main entrance door. As always, if shopping is an issue, monetary donations are always appreciated. Thanks once again in advance for your generosity.

Your Community Outreach Committee.



ST. PAUL'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Alliance, OH 44601

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*Our purpose is to
be the living body
of Jesus Christ!*



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Find us online!
www.livingbody.org
www.facebook.com/St.Pauls.Alliance
www.twitter.com/PaulLutheran
www.instagram.com/St.PaulsAlliance

The Reverend Timothy H. Muse - Lead Pastor
The Reverend Diana Thompson - Administrative Pastor
Rhonda Ferrall - Secretary
Kathy Sloan - Organist
Gina M. Falconer - Director of Music
Brianna L. Black - Director of Christian Education
Gayle B. Fiegenschuh - Communion Minister and Visitation

Stay informed and sign up for *The Weekly Messenger* email on our website, Facebook page, or text 4STPAULS to 22828.

WORSHIP IN JANUARY

In-person on Sunday at 8:30 am and 11:00 am

Livestream worship at 11:00 am every Sunday

Communion Wafers will be made available each week for those who plan to worship from home.

JANUARY CONGREGATIONAL MEETING.

We have not set a date yet for the January congregational meeting. The Church Council will be meeting to discuss the best way to hold the meeting, and then the plans will be announced. Please watch for updates as they are presented.