

# ST. PAUL'S EPISTLE

**FEBRUARY 2024** 

**ISSUE 83** 

**VOLUME 2** 

# For God

so loved the world, that he gave his

only

begotten

hat whosoever

believeth

in him should not perish, out have everlasting life.

John 3:16

## A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR CUMMINGS

Dear Members and Friends of St. Paul's,

"Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

These words, spoken during the Ash Wednesday liturgy, help to remind us that our time on Earth is finite and that through our faith we are connected to all the saints who have gone before us, and the ones who will come after us. It helps to remind us that death is not the end but rather a new beginning. The promise of eternal life with God in heaven.

This year, Ash Wednesday is on February 14, Valentine's Day. Our service will be at 7:00 pm in the sanctuary. It will be a chance for us to be reminded that we are beloved children of God that have been marked with the cross of Christ forever. And that through the gift of the Holy Spirit we are called to share Christ's love with others in our midst.

Beginning on February 21 and the following Wednesdays in Lent, we will gather for Bible Study at 6:00 pm followed by a service of Holden Evening Prayer at 7:00 pm. This year we will be joining with other congregations in our synod for the Bible Study entitled; "Encountering God: Moving Forward with a Changing Church". We will have discussion and conversation as the people of St. Paul's and are also invited to engage with the presenters on Thursday evenings from 7-8 p.m. on Zoom starting on February 22nd. A link to register for the Thursday Zoom calls is on the synod website as well as on our Facebook page and in the weekly emails. Hope to see you there!

Peace and Blessings,

The Rev. Elizabeth A Cummings

#### ST. PAUL'S MISSION STATEMENT:

We of St. Paul's Lutheran Church believe in God's grace given to us freely. We are called to faithfully follow God's Word, sharing in the good news of this grace. We are to be God's hands helping those in need—those we know, and those we do not know.

When we say, "Here I am Lord," we express our desire to become disciples of Christ, accepting the mission to do what is asked of us. Our prayer on this journey is to walk with faith, to love one another, to share God's love and to be the hands of God.

#### FEBRUARY GOSPEL READINGS

FEBRUARY 4TH: Mark 1:29-39

FEBRUARY 11TH: Mark 9:2-9

Transfiguration Sunday

FEBRUARY 14TH: Matthew 6:1-6, 1-21

Ash Wednesday

FEBRUARY 18TH: Mark 1:9-15

First Sunday in Lent

FEBRUARY 25TH: Mark 8:31-38





Ash Wednesday Worship February 14th, 7:00 p.m., Marks Beginning of Lenten Journey

Readings, quiet meditation, song, confession and prayer, along with the cross-shaped tracing of ashes on the foreheads of worshippers will mark the beginning of our Lenten journey at St.Paul's Church on Ash Wednesday, February 14th at 7:00 p.m.





#### 2024 COUNCIL

#### COUNCIL PRESIDENT:

Russ Bengtson rbengt@sbcglobal.net

#### COUNCIL VICE PRESIDENT:

Heather Christensen heather.christensen@combined.com

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# FORTY DAYS, FORTY ITEMS



Wednesday, February 14<sup>th</sup> is the first day of Lent. I have a challenge for you! Each day of Lent remove one item from your closet that you no longer wear or need and put it in a trash bag. At the end of 40 days, donate these items to a place that can share them with someone who can really use them.

#### **ENCOUNTERING GOD:**

**Moving Forward with a Changing Church** 

A Lenten Collaborative Bible Study
Five weeks starting Feb. 19th through March 21st

Week 1 - Genesis 8: The Flood Subsides
Rafaela Radcke, LLM Santuario/ Nuevo Amanecer, Synod Council

Week 2 - Ezekiel 37:1-14: The Valley of Dry Bones
Rev. Elizabeth Nees, Transition Consultant, Coach (PCC), Dean Boston Metro

Week 3 - Matthew 15: 21-27: The Canaanite Woman's Faith

Rev. Dr. Richard Simpson. Canon to the Ordinary. Episcopal Diocese of Western MA

Rev. Dr. Richard Simpson, Canon to the Ordinary, Episcopal Diocese of Western MA Rev. Jennifer Gregg, Missioner for Servant Leadership

Week 4 - John 3: Nicodemus Visits Jesus
Cassandra Wilson, Synod Council, Member of Redeemer, Woburn, MA

Week 5 - Luke 24: The Walk to Emmaus

Ryan Heckman, Christian Education Director, St. Matthew, Avon, CT

Inquiries and Zoom registration: mwhyte@nesynod.org

During Lent we will meet for <u>Bible Study starting</u> <u>Feb. 21st a 6:00 pm. We</u> <u>will then have Holden</u> <u>Prayer Service following</u> at 7pm.

Every week during Lent a brief new video will be shared from the Synod engaging us in scripture and reflection -Encountering God: Moving forward with a Changing Church. You are invited to join the Synod Zoom call on Thursday evenings in Lent starting on February 22 from 7-8 p.m for conversation with the Presenter from with the video and others across our synod.



Your 2023 Statement of Giving will be on the table in Fellowship Hall until Sunday, 2/4/24. Thank you for your generous support.

Just a reminder to please turn in your Pledge for 2024 if you have not already done so.



# 2024 OFFERING ENVELOPES ARE STILL WAITING FOR PICK UP!

The envelopes for 2024 are on the conference table in Fellowship Hall. The envelopes have been renumbered! Please pick up your new box of envelopes. If you cannot pick them up and would like them mailed to you, send me a request <a href="mailto:mprocyk@stpaulswethersfield.org">mprocyk@stpaulswethersfield.org</a> or call me at 860-257-4793.

If you need envelopes and do not find a box on the table, let me know and I will get you a box of envelopes.

The statements for 2023 are out on the conference table.



THIS MONTH OUR FOOD PANTRY NEEDS:

COFFEE CEREAL CANNED SOUP RAMEN NOODLES



We are in need of Worship Volunteers for February and March 2024. Please check the list on the Whiteboard to sign up.

We are no longer using Sign-Up Genius!



To My Brothers & Sisters at St. Paul's.

Thank you so much for the generous gift!!

I am grateful for the gift of being able to Contribute to one of our many ministries here at St. Paul's.

Blessings for the New Year and beyond!!

Larry Hansen

#### WEDNESDAY GET TOGETHER GROUP

Our Wednesday morning Group will not be meeting in Fellowship Hall again until March. They are taking a break for the cold winter months!

We will look forward to their return as spring approaches!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS
APRIL 14, 2024
WOLFPACK GAME
MORE INFO TO COME!!



Greater Hartford Area Services 217 Washington Street, Hartford, CT 06106 Phone: (860) 543-8413 Fax: (860) 882-0588 www.salvationarmyct.org

January 9, 2024

Re: Adopt-A-Family Donations

Dear Joan,

The Salvation Army of Greater Hartford would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your recent participation in our Adopt-A-Family program this Holiday Season. These families were incredibly blessed because of your generous donation of toys, clothing, and household items. These items not only made Christmas a little brighter but have provided a beacon of hope for the days to come.

Again, we express our sincerest appreciation for your kindness and compassion. In the words of Dick Gregory, "One thing I keep learning is that the secret to being happy is doing things for others." I truly hope you found as much joy and happiness in giving, as the family who received these priceless gifts.

We pray for your good health and thank you for your help. May God bless you and your loved ones.

Most sincerely,

Tim ≠ Migdalia Lavenbein
Tim and Migdalia Lavenbein, Majors
Greater Hartford Area Service Coordinators
The Salvation Army
217-225 Washington Street
Hartford, CT 06106
(860) 543-8413

# DO YOU WANT TO FAST THIS LENT?

In the words of Pope Francis

- Fast from hurting words and say kind words.
- Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.
- Fast from anger and be filled with patience.
- Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.
- Fast from worries and have trust in God.
- Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity.
- · Fast from pressures and be prayerful.
- Fast from bitterness and fill your hearts with joy.
- Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.
- Fast from grudges and be reconciled.
- Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.

pietrafitness.com



# ELCA WORLD HUNGER LENT 2024 CALENDAR



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# ELCA WORLD HUNGER LENT 2024 CALENDAR



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#### New England Synod FYI January 26, 2024 Bishop Election Team



Here is an update on the Bishop election process and the timeline.

#### February 1 - Pre-identification Process Opens

An online form will be made available by which individuals may submit the name of a rostered minister for consideration; individuals may also submit their own name. A version of the form will be available for download as well.

#### February 29 - Pre-identification Process Closes

At midnight on February 29, submissions will be closed.

#### March 20 - Pre-identified Person Information Due

Those whose names have been submitted will be contacted to determine if they are willing to discern a call to serve as bishop. If so, they'll be asked to provide biographical details and a photograph, as well as submit to a background check.

#### **April 15 - Pre-identified Persons Information Available on Synod Website**

Biographical information and a photograph of each pre-identified person choosing to move forward will be posted on the synod website for review.

#### June 5 - Pre-identified Persons Information Removed from Synod Website

Information will be removed from the website the day prior to Synod Assembly.

#### June 6 - Synod Assembly begins

The bishop election will proceed according to the rules set forth in the <u>synod constitution</u>. The first ballot will include the names of the pre-identified persons, as well as offering voting members the opportunity to name a rostered minister who is not listed. Click on this link: <u>synod constitution</u>.

As a reminder, all of this information as well as the overall process and timeline are available on the synod web page.

# AS SEEN RECENTLY AROUND ST. PAUL'S



"If I had a hammer..."
CHRISTMAS JOY!!!

Pastor Elizabeth Cummings hammers home the Message!!



CHOIR TWINS!!



OUR "TEAM STREAM"

# DECORATING THE CHURCH FOR ADVENT











# OUR KAZOO BAND PLAYERS - JANUARY 28TH







SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 FOOD PANTRY 10:00-1:00	2	3 SALEM CHURCH
4 10:00 AM WORSHIP COFFEE FELLOWSHIP	5	6 WORSHIP & MUSIC 4:30 PM	7 CHOIR 7:30	8 FOOD PANTRY 10:00-1:00 COMMUNICA- TIONS MTG 6 PM	9	10 SALEM CHURCH
11 10:00 AM WORSHIP 11:00 AM PANCAKE BREAKFAST COFFEE FELLOWSHIP	12	PARISH ADMIN MTG 6:30 PM	14 VALENTINE'S DAY! ASH WEDNES- DAY SVC. 7 PM CHOIR 7:30	15 FOOD PANTRY 10:00-1:00	16	17 SALEM CHURCH
18 10:00 AM WORSHIP COFFEE FELLOWSHIP	19	20 CHURCH COUNCIL MTG 7:00 PM	21 BIBLE STUDY 6 PM HOLDEN PRAYER SVC. 7 PM CHOIR 7:30	22 FOOD PANTRY 10:00-1:00 ENCOUNTER- ING GOD DISCUSSION 7 PM VIA ZOOM	23	24 SALEM CHURCH
25 10:00 AM WORSHIP COFFEE FELLOWSHIP	26	27	28 BIBLE STUDY 6 PM HOLDEN PRAYER SVC. 7 PM CHOIR 7:30	29 FOOD PANTRY 10:00-1:00 ENCOUNTER- ING GOD DISCUSSION 7 PM VIA ZOOM		

# WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS - FEBRUARY THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE

#### FEBRUARY 4TH

ASSISTING MINISTER: Sue Agne

Patty Bengtson READER:

Jerry Hansen, Walter Ruppar and Sophia **USHERS:** 

Deb & George Howe ALTAR:

COUNTER: George Howe

Jerry Hansen & Judy Lundin FELLOWSHIP HOUR:

FEBRUARY 11TH

ASSISTING MINISTER: Carol Bruce

READER:

Jerry Hansen, Walter Ruppar and Sophia **USHERS:** 

Carol Bruce ALTAR:

Heather Christensen COUNTER:

FEBRUARY 14TH - ASH WEDNESDAY

ASSISTING MINISTER: Patty Bengtson Patty Bengtson READER:

Jerry Hansen, Walter Ruppar & Sophia **USHERS:** 

Deb & George Howe ALTAR: COUNTER: Dave Hourigan

FEBRUARY 18TH

ASSISTING MINISTER:

READER:

**USHERS:** Jerry Hansen, Walter Ruppar and Sophia

Elaine Strecker **ALTAR** Dave Hourigan COUNTER:

Jerry Hansen & Judy Lundin FELLOWSHIP HOUR:

FEBRUARY 25TH

ASSISTING MINISTER: Joy Hansen READER: Joy Hansen

Jerry Hansen, Walter Ruppar and Sophia Deb Howe **USHERS**:

ALTAR COUNTER: Judy Gerken

FELLOWSHIP HOUR: Jerry Hansen & Judy Lundin

#### PASTOR:

The Reverend Elizabeth Cummings pastor@stpaulswethersfield.org

#### ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT:

Lorraine Gianakos office@stpaulswethersfield.org

#### MINISTER OF MUSIC:

Melissa Cheyney missycheyney@yahoo,com

# SUPERINTENDENT OF SUNDAY CHURCH SCHOOL:

Alice Ruppar

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#### **BOOKKEEPER**

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