

February
2020

The Messenger

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN
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Transition Pastor
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Council President
Nancy Faulds



Proudly
Serving

ST. PAUL'S
◆ John A. Priestly III
◆ SR Mountzouros, Andrew, M.
Naval Submarine School



DEADLINE
February 11

Send submissions to
saintpaulsdansville@gmail.com

St. Pauls' Lutheran Church 21 Clara Barton Street Dansville, NY 14437
(585) 335-5260 saintpaulsdansville@gmail.com www.spdans.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
21 Clara Barton Street
Dansville, NY 14437

Loads of Love

Individuals can receive funding for 3 loads of washing and drying.
Families can receive funding for 5 loads of washing and drying.

Our schedule will be as follows:

Eagle Laundromat on West Avenue

Feb 1st: 8:30 am - 11:30 am

Feb 17th: 4:30 pm - 7:30 pm

Family Laundromat, 20 Franklin St.

Feb 3rd: 4:30 pm - 7:30 pm

Feb 15th: 8:30 am - 11:30 am



*Please consider joining the team to help with this new ministry.
Contact Joan Brydges or Ann Myers.*

Stewardship Message from Nancy Faulds

2019 has been a very successful year!

We donated 10% of all our regular offerings to Synod, so they could use it to continue their work for the worldwide Church. We were the second largest donors in our Synod to World Hunger - \$996.00 was delivered at the June Assembly by our representatives, the Robin family. Thanks to all of you for your generosity!

We had our "God's Work. Our Hands." drive and delivered a car full of paper and high protein products to the Dansville Food Pantry in October. We had our Pie Sunday stewardship drive kickoff and raised \$85.00 in pie sales which also went to the pantry.

We donated every fourth Sunday of the year to Geneseo Outreach which gives health care services to needy people in our area. At the end of the drive we raised about \$37,000.00 toward our 2020 budget!

All these things we were able to do because you all "share so generously" not only of your treasure, but of your time and talents as well! Blessings to you all and thank you for all you do!

**COME TO
H.O.P.E. LUNCH**
Helping Other People Eat

a FREE Luncheon

**Saturday, February 29th,
11:30 am to 1:00 pm**

**at St. Peter's Episcopal Church
25 Clara Barton St, Dansville**



Pastor's Message

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

As this is my first "official" communication to you, I suppose it would help to tell you a little about myself. Beyond the letter from the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester affirming my status as a priest in good standing, you mainly know me as the Rector of St. Peter's next door. I could send a resume, which would tell you that I have been ordained just a bit over 15 years, have served seven churches in a variety of capacities for varying lengths of time. It would also note my military chaplaincy service and my time working in medical chaplaincy. You might catch the bullet point about Christian education and youth at one church, or administration and stewardship improvements at another.

All this might give you a sense of my experience in other places, but it would tell you precious little about *me*. It would not say that I'm married with two children, or that I like cheeseburgers and anything I can grow in our small garden (though my size and shape might clue you in as to the latter point). You'd never know from a resume just how close some of my favorite successes came to being failures, or how I have wrestled with my faith. My education does not list how my first academic love was science or that my ordination was the culmination of a long process that began with my resistance to God's call. I come from coal miner, railroader, military, and nursing stock, as well. I'll add, for good measure, that I have an odd sense of humor and have rarely if ever been funny on purpose.

These things just aren't resume fare, but they tell you more about me than a resume ever could. And on top of them, there are matters of my faith and approach to ministry that are hard to fit in a standard application package. In 15 years of ordained service I have yet to be asked how passionate I am about Jesus Christ and His Church; the answer is a lot, but how that translates in a community is something we will need

to explore together. No one has ever asked me in an interview if I could love their local community; please know that my family and I love this village and surrounding area very much *as it is*, not just how we might imagine it to be.

Finally, interviews ask what an applicant did in a given situation, or how her or his experience fits a given community. I have at last become experienced enough to know that I honestly do not know. Individual gifts and talents are presented in community, and it is the community of faith working together with Christ that leads to real, lasting, meaningful accomplishments. Therefore, I believe whatever gifts I have must join up with whatever gifts you have in order to experiment for the Kingdom of God. Pastors may make some decisions, more suggestions, and technical adjustments, but the work of the church is very much a team effort.

So it is I look forward to seeing what we can do together this year. I love the Lord, His church, and this community very much, and I am excited for what may be possible for the Church Park churches. I look forward to getting to know you, working with you, and together being the church in Dansville, New York.

Eric+

NOTICE:
NEW worship time

Starting February 2nd

Worship begins at **9:00 am**

Truly human

By Frank G. Honeycutt

Every December, I take somewhat dark delight in viewing (Google it for grins) a 1926 painting by German artist Max Ernst titled “The Blessed Virgin Chastising the Infant Jesus before Three Witnesses.”

Mary is wearing a red dress and appears to have temporarily lost it with her son—a young boy in the painting—whose rosy upturned bottom draped across his mom’s knees suggests some sort of boyhood mischief has just gone down in the Lord’s hometown. The artist depicts Jesus’ halo resting on the ground. Mary’s remains intact.

The painting seems to reveal the artist’s sympathies toward an earthly parent raising such a son. We don’t know a lot about Jesus’ childhood (an apocryphal tale about the lad turning a bully into a bird was wisely left out of the biblical canon), but Mary’s days were surely sometimes trying.

Her son, age 12, going missing in Jerusalem for 72 hours (Luke 2:41-51)—even in an era well before snatched children began appearing on the back of milk cartons—discloses how Mary’s job description as “Mom to the Son of God” was a bit more than she bargained for upon saying, “Yes, let it be” (1:38), following the angel Gabriel’s unusual invitation. (Perhaps Paul McCartney missed this tension 20 centuries later as he composed a famous Beatles song seemingly dependent on Mary’s humble agreement.)

Upon listening to the very understandable “great anxiety” shared between “your father and I” (2:48) during their frantic search—ominous, guilt-inducing words any soon-to-be teenager never wants to hear—the boy Jesus offers a surprising counter-question to his parents given his adult affection for the fourth commandment: “Why were you searching for me?” (2:49). Quite the sassy reply, no matter how you parse it.

I’m rather fond of the Lord’s sassiness during his adult ministry as he occasionally mocks and shows up those in charge, but, for the record, this impertinent response would not have

flown with Ruth Honeycutt in my childhood home in Chattanooga.

Mary should be remembered for much more than her notable virginity. Birthing Jesus may have been a walk in the park compared to raising the boy.

The artist guides his brush to tweak our convictions concerning the never-to-be-easily-resolved duality of Jesus’ origins. Or, as the Nicene Creed puts it: “True God from true God” who “became truly human.”

I love the beautiful carol “Away in a Manger” (long attributed to Martin Luther and now thought to be thoroughly 19th-century North American), but I try not to get distracted each Christmas Eve while singing: *The cattle are lowing; the baby awakes, but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.*

Now, come on. No crying? Most infants of my acquaintance do a fair amount of wailing upon waking from sleep, especially when startled by a bovine choir.

I suspect this sentiment attempts to reinforce the idea that Jesus was special, precocious and unique among babies. (He was.) But it also misses the truth that the child was fully human and undoubtedly cried, messed his diapers, threw a tantrum or two, and grew up into a teenager with occasional rebellious and haughty moments.

In Giacomo Sartori’s entertaining novel *I Am God* (2016, translated from the Italian), the Creator reports that a modern expression of the incarnation would include an immersion in “normal things: squeeze onto the bus at rush hour, shop in shopping centers mobbed with people, watch a TV series sprawled on a sofa. I’d sample the whole palette of human sensations.”

I’m convinced Jesus didn’t pop out of his mom’s womb preprogrammed to always do and say the right and perfect thing. This last sentence may unnerve some Lutherans, but denying the statement also calls into question the beautiful mystery inherent in our creeds. At Christmas, the incarnation trumpets not Jesus’ divinity or humanity (choose one), but instead wondrously both.

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DATE	DEACON	LECTOR	ACOLYTE	USHERS/GREETER
Feb 2	Ann Myers	Olivia Miller	Jocelyn Miller	Rodney Button Tina Button
Feb 9	Carolyn Baker	Glenn Gates		Tarry Priestly <i>and one other</i>
Feb 16	Paul Smith	Tom Miller	Jocelyn Miller	Dick Sahrle Bob Whiteman
Feb 23	Penny Leven	Henry Robin		Paul Button Rodney Button
March 1	Ann Myers	Gerri Long	Ellie Mountzouros	Glenn Gates Bill Shaver

If you cannot be a helper on your appointed day, please trade OR call the Church Office.

Invited into the Wilderness

By Angela Khabeb

Our Advent lectionary readings this year are a rich tapestry. In Matthew's Gospel, we are swept up together in the comforting but challenging reality of the "already" and the "not yet."

Matthew begins with the genealogy of Jesus and moves directly into his birth narrative. In fact, we receive a large portion of the traditional Christmas story from this Gospel. But John the Baptist takes center stage during Advent. As we continue our journey toward Bethlehem, we are invited into the wilderness.

When we first read Matthew 3, we might find ourselves thinking, "Well, *this* is an interesting journey to the manger." What does John the Baptist have to do with Christmas? According to Matthew, *everything*.

John the Baptist had a message. This bizarre wilderness-wanderer preached a message of repentance and preparation. His duty fulfilled the words of the prophet Isaiah, "A voice cries out: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God'" (Isaiah 40:3).

In Matthew 3:7, we hear in John the Baptist's fiery Advent sermon: "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" (If you haven't sent your Christmas

cards yet, try including this phraseology: "Happy holidays, you brood of vipers!") At this time of year, many people have the traditional Christmas story foremost in their minds. Consequently, his message may sound especially peculiar.

This thing called Christianity often beckons us to places we may not want to go. While the rest of the world is celebrating Christmas, we are drawn into the wilderness, called to repentance. Even today, John the Baptist stands in the wilderness, calling to us, "Prepare the way! Make his paths straight!" Jesus is coming. Are we ready?

We may be asking ourselves, "Shouldn't our message now be about hope, peace and joy?" But John the Baptist's call to repentance is at the heart of who Christ is. After all, "repentance" simply means to turn away from the sin that easily creeps into our lives and robs us of the very things we deeply desire (e.g., hope, peace and joy).

As we heed the wilderness preacher and turn from sin, we simultaneously turn ourselves to Jesus. In so doing, we prepare our hearts to receive the babe in the manger. Can there be any message more fitting? Is there any message filled with more hope, peace and joy than turning our faces to the warmth of the Son?

The good news for us today is the same good news John the Baptist's original audience received: Jesus is coming! Jesus is here! And we are ready!

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Dates to Remember

ST. PAUL'S FEBRUARY

PASTOR'S OFFICE HOURS:

Please call for an appointment

SECRETARY'S OFFICE HOURS:

Tues 9am-12pm, Fri 9am-11am

Sat. 1st: 8:30am **LaundryLove**-Eagle Laundromat

Sun. 2nd: 9:00am **Communion**
& **Sunday School**
Choir after the service
Social Ministry after the service

Mon. 3rd: 4:30pm **LaundryLove**-Family Laundromat

Sun. 9th: 9:00am **Communion**
& **Sunday School**
Coffee Hour after service

Tues. 11th: **Newsletter deadline**

Sat. 15th: 8:30am **LaundryLove**-Family Laundromat

Sun. 16th: 9:00am **Communion**
& **Sunday School**

Mon. 17th: 4:30pm **LaundryLove**-Eagle Laundromat

Wed. 19th: 7:00 pm **Choir**

Sun. 23rd: *Geneseo Outreach loose plate collection*
9:00am **Communion**
& **Sunday School**

Wed. 26th: *Ash Wednesday*
Service will be announced



February Birthdays

Trinity Robin
February 9
Arthur Leven
February 21
David Smith
February 24
Heather Robin
February 25
John Buck
February 26
Rosie Alexander
February 27

Please contact the
Church Office
if we missed anyone.

Christ In Our Home



Feb & March
2020

Available by
the mailboxes