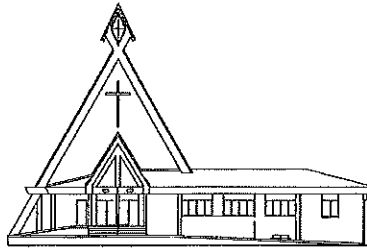


St. Paul's Lutheran Church

7426 Idylwood Road
Falls Church, Virginia 22043
703-573-0295, fax 703-573-3273
www.stpaulsfallchurch.org



A congregation of the
Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod

Rev. Mark Shaltanis, Pastor
Rev. Chris Yang, Chinese Pastor 杨牧师
Rev. Wayne Lehrer, Pastoral Assistant

Our mission is to share the life-changing good news of God's love for all people in Jesus Christ.

November 1, 2020

RE: Congregational Update and Stewardship Plan

Dear Members/Friends of St. Paul's:

Greetings to each of you in the blessed name of our Lord Jesus!

Each year about this time, our congregation engages in a process to promote and enable our stewardship. We do this in our life together – adjusting our budget for the upcoming year and electing our leaders. And we do this as individuals – thinking and praying about our own personal stewardship and making an estimate of our giving.

Before sharing the details of this year's stewardship plan, we thought it would be good to give you a few congregational updates. This has been a very unique and challenging year as you well know. In His mercy, God has continued to care for us. He has led us in developing new ways of worshiping together and communicating with one another. He has guided us in applying our faith to new challenges. And although we have had to step back some of our activity at the church, we see that God continues to sustain us.

If you've been reading our weekly emails you have a sense of the activities and changes that currently mark our life together, so we won't repeat that information here. What may be new to you are these three items:

1. Our financial giving has continued at its normal pace. This means that we can meet our obligations and continue carrying out our work. Thanks be to God! And thanks also to each of you for your faithful giving.
2. Regarding our Building Fund Campaign, we have received sufficient funds this year (\$104,000) to cover our 2020 mortgage payments (\$87,000). And while a large share of the funds came at the beginning of the campaign, we continue to receive about \$3,500 a month in new contributions. With this knowledge, the Church Council has decided not to initiate a new campaign for 2021, but simply encourage members to continue contributing toward the existing fund – which we are doing through this letter.
3. The St. Paul's Land Sale Committee recently decided to let lapse the contract we had with a local developer for the sale of a portion of our property. The decision was made because the developer lowered their offer. We know this is discouraging news, but we are confident that the right deal will eventually present itself. The Committee is currently exploring new strategies to complete a sale.

With these updates shared, we ask that you now consider our Stewardship Plan. Stewardship, you recall, is the managing of all that God gives for the furthering of his purposes. We seek to manage our time, talents and financial earnings in a way that shows care for ourselves, our families, our church and our community. To manage the gifts of God properly, we apportion them according to the guidelines of the Scriptures and the freedom we have as those redeemed by Christ.

Proverbs 3:9 says, "Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the first-fruits of all your crops." First-fruits giving is the setting aside of a percentage of one's resources to be used for the needs of God's Church. A good practice, commended in the Scriptures, is to give a tithe (10%) to the Church. Some will be able to give more, while others may have to work toward that number. We all give as God gives to us.

The theme of this year's stewardship emphasis is "**A time to be wise; a time to be bold.**" It comes from Matthew 25 – portions of which will be read during our worship services on November 8, 15 and 22. The theme will be unpacked for us during the sermons and we ask that you listen to and/or read them as a means of growing in your faith and understanding.

To further assist your stewardship, and to help the congregation as well, we are asking you to fill out the **My Christian Stewardship 2021** form included in this mailing. You may notice that this year's form is much shorter than the one we've used in previous years. The change reflects the uncertainty of our "time and talent" needs right now as well as our need to keep things simple.

Upon prayerfully considering and estimating your giving for the coming year, we ask that you return this form to the church on or around Commitment Sunday, November 22. You may bring it in person to a Eucharistic Gathering, drop it off in the office, or send it via mail or email to the attention of our Business Manager, John Bean (businessmanager@stpaulsfallchurch.org).

On behalf of the entire congregation, we thank you for your partnership with us in the mission of our Lord Jesus through St. Paul's. Together we are proclaiming the Gospel, encouraging one another, reaching out, teaching, serving and growing.

These days are truly a time to be wise and a time to be bold. May God bless us in our stewardship of His gifts and in our life together in His service.

Yours in Christ,

Mark Shaltanis
Senior Pastor

Dave O'Neill
Congregational President

Paul Provance
Chair, Board of Stewardship

