



The Epistle

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, 117 East Arch Street, Fleetwood, PA

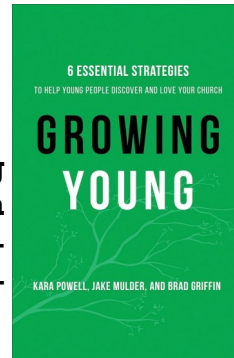
Growing Young

Studies reveal that most churches are aging and shrinking! As we and our active church folks age, the average age of our congregations increase. Eventually, due to death, conflict, or happenstance, our numbers decline.

We are not left powerless in the face of these daunting realities. Growing Young is a resource that explores **6 Core Characteristics of Jesus-Centered communities** that are actively involving and retaining people of all ages, especially 15-29-year-olds. Through listening, reflection, discernment, and experimentation, Growing Young gives us the framework and support to make lasting and life-giving changes within our congregations so that we don't get in the way of what God is already up to in our communities. (NEPA Synod)

The 6 Core Characteristics ¹

1. *Unlock keychain leadership.* Instead of centralizing authority, empower others-especially young people.
2. *Empathize with today's young people.* Instead of judging or criticizing, step into the shoes of this generation.
3. *Take Jesus' message seriously.* Instead of asserting formulaic gospel claims, welcome young people into a Jesus-centered way of life.
4. *Fuel a warm community.* Instead of focusing on cool worship or programs, aim for warm peer and intergenerational friendships.
5. *Prioritize young people (and families) everywhere.* Instead of giving lip service to how much young people matter, look for creative ways to tangibly support, resource, and involve them in all facets of your congregation.
6. *Be the best neighbors.* Instead of condemning the world outside your walls, enable young people to neighbor well locally and globally.



May 2024

Up Coming Events

Mother's Day - May 12

**Affirmation of Baptism/
Rite of Confirmation**
May 19

Preschool Graduation
May 20

**End of Year
Preschool Picnic**
May 22



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Sometimes, all it takes is a simple conversation to grow deeper relationships!

Recent Coffee & Conversations have focused on communicating and listening to all generations from our congregation about our life experiences, good and bad, and our expectations. We have found out we are more similar than different despite our ages!

Come join us as we move forward in our journey growing young, discovering and loving our church!

Welcome to Worship

We want everyone to feel comfortable worshipping with us and realize that some people are still anxious when gathering in groups of people. For your convenience and safety, consider the following: Hand sanitizer will continue to be available as you enter worship. There are also masks available for anyone choosing to wear one. Please be aware: If you test positive for COVID-19 within five days of worshipping with us, we kindly ask that you follow proper quarantine protocols and contact the church office as soon as possible. Please do not come to worship or other activities if you are not feeling well, even if you think it's just a cold. If at any time you have concerns, please contact the office or a member of the Worship & Music Team. Members of the team are: Gretchen Mertz, Marla Gieringer, Cindy Borrell, Donna Fick, Nancy Bowman, Donna Ahrens, and Martin Hinkley. Our team listens carefully to your comments, making adjustments to our services as necessary, and delights in new ideas!

COMMUNION CARDS, OFFERING ENVELOPES AND MAINTAINING YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Why are communion cards available in the pews and how often should I complete one? According to our constitution at least one record of communion and one record of contribution is required each year to maintain active membership at St. Paul's. It's that easy. When you complete a communion card, it's entered into our database and serves as your record of communion.

Should I complete a communion card every time I commune?

Please complete a communion card if:

- This is the first time you are communing in 2024
- You are a guest in our congregation

You do not need to complete a card each time you commune but at least one time each calendar year. Remember all family members can go on one communion card.

To provide a record of contribution, please use your offering envelope or write a check so there is physical evidence of your contribution which is then credited to you in our database. We will send a friendly reminder to you if a year passes with no record of your having communed or contributed; after two consecutive years with no record, your membership status will be moved to inactive.

Council Corner

- The meeting was held on April 16, 2024
- Confirmands to meet with church council and congregation May 5, 2024
- Supply pastors scheduled through to June
- Preschool currently has 45 students enrolled for next year
- Erin Martin's spring student recital will be on Saturday, May 25, 2024
- Currently we are looking for someone to head up Coffee & Conversation or look for new ways to do this

Special Monthly Offering



"Habitat for Humanity" is a nonprofit organization that helps families build and improve places to call home. We believe affordable housing plays a critical role in strong and stable communities." St. Paul's has helped to build sheds for Habitat in the past. Let's join with them once again through our monthly offering and change lives by helping others to become homeowners.



Prayer List

The prayer list is an instrument to remind us of our responsibility to intercessory prayer for our community, world, and church. To add a name to the prayer list, call the church office. Names will be removed after four weeks, unless otherwise advised. Prayer makes a difference!

Pray for those serving in the military: Connor Geer, Rob Geer, Daniel Keller, Brayden Kiebach, Travis Meck, Lauren Moyer, Sydney Plucker, Matt Roberts, Ryan Stitzel, Colin Walbert.



Pray for those in need of ongoing, long term prayer: Andrew Beerer, Kathy Boalton, Marion Boyer, The Davies Family, June Derr, Essie & Barney Dietrich, Maggie Emerick, Barbara Faust, Mary Ann Ferretti, Dennis Gillner, Betty Gruber, Marie Hawkins, Cindy Burke-Hearter, Nancy Heffner, Juanita Heist, Jane Hill, Jon (Max) Keller, Martin Keller, Don Kirby, Sharon Kirkhoff, Elizabeth Kohler, Betty Kurzweg, Jeffrey Merkel, Joyce Miller, Steve Miller, The Neff Family, Ruth Oxenreider, Desmond Parker, Charles Pinter, Bruce Remmel, Peggy Reppert, Joyce Schittler, Viola Snyder, Lori Spatz, Richard Spatz, Mabel Stopp, Kenneth Tanis, Frank Vroman, Daisy Wahl, Marie Wessner.

A Note about Pastoral Care

Please contact us if you or another member of your family enters the hospital or experiences a significant illness, trauma, or need.

Pr. David Blich at 484-663-4911

Pr. Allen Forsman at 610-682-7028

Pr. Marty Milne, 610-682-7664 (church)



Food Collections are ongoing!

Kindly remember the many families and individuals who are struggling to afford food. Simply drop your non-perishable donations in the food bin in the lobby.



Measles is one of the world's most contagious diseases. It is spread by breath, cough, sneeze, or contaminated surfaces, lingering up to 2 hours. It can lead to serious complications including permanent brain damage. The incidence of cases has already more than doubled this year. Fewer children are getting vaccinated, often claiming waivers. Be sure your children have their MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella) vaccination.

Choosing Sides:

My concern is not whether God is on our side; my greatest concern is to be on God's side, for God is always right. (Abraham Lincoln)



Make a Joyful Noise

Share your musical gifts with us. Whether you're just starting to learn an instrument or have years of experience, we welcome your talents to make our worship more meaningful.

Contact Martin Hinkley at: mhinkley@ptd.net



Recognition of Graduating Seniors

We would like to recognize this year's high school, college graduating seniors. They are about to enter a new phase of life and we'd like to congratulate them and hear about their future plans. Please send us the name of the graduate and pictures (past & present) along with their chosen career path, to:

office@spelcfleetwood.com



Let Us Pray Together

Are you interested in providing a prayer petition as we await our new pastor? Adults, youth and families are welcome to submit a two to three sentence petition to: office@spelcfleetwood.com.

Petitions can focus on prayers for our supply pastors, prayers for the pastor and his/her family who will come to us and prayers for our congregation during this time of transition.



Make a Big Splash VBS 2024

Children age 4 (as of 9/1/24) through grade 6 are invited to VBS June 10-13, 6:00 PM-8:00 PM. Children will dive deep into an amazing undersea adventure where they'll build a friendship with God and experience the ever-flowing, never-ending love of God. Register online or registration forms are located at the display near the parking lot doors beginning April 1. Contact Carol Cox with any questions. carolc314@gmail.com



VBS Volunteers Needed

It takes many people to offer a successful VBS program. VBS is June 10-13, 6:00 PM-8:00 PM. We need group leaders, Bible story leader, games leaders, snack helpers, and science station helpers to name a few. I am also looking for people to help create decorations before VBS begins. If you can help in any way, please contact Carol Cox at carolc314@gmail.com or 717-808-4642.



Pre-School Summer Camp

We are excited for our Summer Camp season! Our camps run Monday through Thursday for children ages 2 ½ - 6 year-olds (who are entering kindergarten in the Fall). The drop off time is 9:15 AM and pick up time is 11:45 AM. We will provide a snack and drink. The cost is \$75 a week, payable when you register and is non-refundable. Please contact Jenn Davies for more information at preschool@spelcfleetwood.com or 610-944-0922.

Our themes are...

June 17-20 **Farm to Table**

July 8-11 **The World of Despicable Me**

August 5-8 **Hawaiian Hullabaloo**



MAY WORSHIP HAPPENINGS

WORSHIP AT 8:30 AM EACH SUNDAY

**SUNDAY SCHOOL, CATECHISM AND COFFEE & CONVERSATION WILL BE HELD AT
9:45 – 10:30 AM**

Sunday, May 5 - 6th Sunday of Easter

Pr. David Blicht will be our Supply Pastor

This Sunday's image of the life the risen Christ shares with us is the image of friendship. Friendship captures the love, the joy, the deep mutuality of the relationship into which Christ invites us.

Sunday, May 12 - 7th Sunday of Easter/Mother's Day

Pr. Burlington Latshaw will be our Supply Pastor



The gospel for Easter's seventh Sunday is always taken from the long prayer. Jesus prays for his followers in John's gospel on the night before his death, and always, includes Jesus' desire that his followers will be one as he and the Father are one. This oneness is the work of the Spirit whom we have received but also await. Come, Holy Spirit!

Sunday, May 19 - Day of Pentecost

Pr. David Blicht will be our Supply Pastor

Fifty days after Easter, we celebrate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. Crossing all boundaries that would separate us, the Spirit brings the wideness of God's mercy to places we least expect it—to a crowd of strangers of different lands and tongues, to dry bones, to our weak hearts.



Today we faithfully and proudly celebrate the **Affirmation of Baptism/Rite of Confirmation** for Katie Cox, Kayla Holly, Sarah Kring, Calli Martin, Leon Trexler, Peyton Trexler and Ella Williams.

Sunday, May 26 - Holy Trinity

Pr. Carl Flier will be our Supply Pastor



When we say God is the triune God, we are saying something about who God is beyond, before, and after the universe: that there is community within God. When we pray to God as Jesus prayed to his Abba (an everyday, intimate parental address), the Spirit prays within us, creating between us and God the same relationship Jesus has with the one who sent him.



Our New Cross



Aidan Kidd of Boy Scout Troop 183 in Blandon recently replaced the wooden cross at the main entrance to St Paul's as part of his Eagle Scout project.

On Friday, March 8, Aidan led a small team of fellow Boy Scouts and adult leaders in the construction and installation of the new cross. Aidan led all phases of the project, from removal of the old cross, to planning and shopping for material, to design, construction, and installation of the new cross in time for the Easter Season.

Aidan undertook this project as one of the final steps on his journey to Eagle Scout. This is the highest rank in the Boy Scout program, and is only achieved by a small number of scouts. It requires significant time in the program, and the mastery of important life skills such as camping, cooking, and first aid skills. On the journey to becoming an Eagle Scout, a young person learns leadership, citizenship, and duty to God.



Many thanks to Aidan for this gift of service!



Finances at St. Paul's

ELCA Federal Credit Union: A financial partner that shares its profits and shares your values

ELCA members and employees of congregations and ministries are eligible to join the ELCA Federal Credit Union and take advantage of membership benefits, including:

No-fee checking accounts, with no monthly maintenance, minimum balance or overdraft fees.*

Auto loan rates for up to 50% less than the national average.**

And, for a limited time, no payments for up to 60 days and rates as low as 5.99% on personal loans for home improvement projects, repairs and other expenses.

The ELCA Federal Credit Union is a not-for-profit financial cooperative that shares its profits in the form of lower fees and better rates — helping you and the ministries you love do more with your money.



	<u>Mar-24</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>YTD</u> <u>Actual</u>
Income		
Non-Preschool M&M	\$ 29,666	\$ 62,716
Preschool M&M	\$ 18,914	\$ 40,664
Total	\$ 48,580	\$ 103,379
Expense		
Non-Preschool	\$ 13,761	\$ 54,146
Preschool	\$ 9,641	\$ 27,739
Total	\$ 23,402	\$ 81,885
Income Less Expenses - Non-Preschool	\$ 15,905	\$ 8,570
Income Less Expenses - Pre-school	\$ 9,273	\$ 12,925
Total Income Less Expenses	\$ 25,177	\$ 21,494

Simply
giving®

Did you know that you can now manage your giving to St. Paul's online? Simply Giving is an easy, secure, and convenient way to have your weekly, monthly, or yearly offering transferred directly to St. Paul's from your checking or savings account. No more writing checks and searching for that offering envelope. It just takes a few minutes to enroll and you are on your way to Simply Giving! Enrollment forms are available in the church office or visit www.spelcfleetwood.com\give-online

May Mystery Members

By Melissa Neff

This month's mystery family is a couple who have belonged to St. Paul's for a long time. Mr. grew up in Schuylkill County in Hegins Valley, and Mrs. grew up outside of Easton in Williams Township.

They met when they were attending Kutztown University. She was a freshman, and he was a junior. They were both staying at the same in town residency. Ten students were in one house, and eight were in another.

The couple dated for four years before getting married. In 1969 they got engaged on the date when Neil Armstrong walked on the moon. In June of this year they will be married for 54 years.

Mr. and Mrs. were both teachers. When Mr. started teaching in 1968, he was only twenty-one years old. He was actually only a few years older than some of his students because some were sixteen or seventeen years old. For his first four years he taught sixth grade and eighth grade physical science. At that time there were only about ninety students in the whole grade. For the rest of his career he only taught eighth grade physical science. He retired in 2003 but went back in the 2004/2005 year for a half year to help in an emergency situation. Since retirement he also spent time working as the middle school Science Olympiad coach.

While they were engaged, they were both in the same building at the same time. This was today's community center, which was the old middle school. Mrs. student-taught in the fifth grade there, and Mr. was working there as a teacher. In 1970 Mrs. started teaching second grade in Fleetwood. After she had her children, she left to raise them. When she returned, she taught preschool in Hamburg.

She did daily substituting in the area, and then in 1991 she obtained a position teaching third grade at Kutztown Elementary.

Mr. and Mrs. have two grown children and seven grandchildren. All of them are involved in 4H except one grandchild who is involved in agriculture, and all of the grandchildren plan to have a career in agriculture.

As mentioned previously, Mr. and Mrs. have belonged to St. Paul's for many years. Mr. joined in 1968 when he moved to Fleetwood, and he wanted to join a Lutheran church. When they were married in 1970, Mrs. joined. They have been very active members of our church. Mrs. has been on Worship and Music for many years and taught Sunday School and Vacation Bible School in the past. Mr. was on the stewardship committee and taught sixth grade Sunday School. They were Directors of Christian Education for six years, and both were involved with the youth group when it was known as Luther League. They have sung on the choir for a long time and have been going to God's Word Blesses Us (GWBU) since it began around 2008. In fact, Mr. now leads the study.

Their last actual vacation was in 1997 to Colorado. They had a trip planned for their 50th anniversary, but then COVID happened. This trip was going to be a train excursion to National Parks in the west.

Their hobbies are very interesting. Mrs. enjoys reading books that have serial killers, and she belongs to a book club. Mr. listens to books of all kinds. Their other hobbies involve sheep.

It had been Mr.'s dream to have a farm. As a teenager, he had chickens. Presently, he has

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125 chickens and close to 100 sheep. He has two breeds of sheep. They sell breeding stock and sell lambs for meat. Mrs. did not want any dairy animals. Their farm is named Winterside Farm because it is on the side of a hill that does not get any sun in the winter.

They have been involved with various organizations due to the sheep. They were in 4H since 1987. Both of them were leaders of the 4H Sheep Club in Berks County for a number of years. Mr. was the sheep superintendent of the Kutztown Fair Board for thirty years, and Mr. and Mrs. are the sheep and goat superintendents at the Allentown Fair.

Their main travel is visiting their family and taking their sheep places. They exhibit their sheep at the York, Allentown, and Bloomsburg

Fairs and two farm shows. They help at the Kutztown Fair, and they are in charge of the wool at the Harrisburg Farm Show and the Keystone International Livestock Exposition.

Various projects come from the wool. Mr. weaves shawls and other items and teaches different kids' groups to weave. He has also made children's pouches. They wash the wool, dye it, and have it made into yarn.

With all this information, you might have figured out who this couple is. If not, find out next month.

Last month's Mystery Members were

The Trexler's, Jennifer, Troy, Peyton and Leon!

Thank You

Dear Friends and Members of St. Paul's ,
Thank you everyone for all the care, concern, phone calls and cards during my recent hospitalization during my recent illness. God Bless, also some visits from close friends.

God Bless,
Fay Moatz



St. Paul's Evangelical
Lutheran Church



117 East Arch Street

Office Hours:

Monday—Thursday 9am to 3pm
(except the 3rd Tuesday 2-5pm)



Purpose

*Filled with the Holy Spirit
We inspire Spiritual Growth in the Community of
Christ by striving to ...*

Guiding Principles

- ◆ *Welcome All People*
- ◆ *Pray Daily*
- ◆ *Worship Weekly*
- ◆ *Read, Listen, Reflect and Share the Word of God*
- ◆ *Serve at and beyond St. Paul's*
- ◆ *Encourage Spiritual Friendships*
- ◆ *Share God's Blessings Generously through the Giving of Our Time, Talents and Resources*

Contact Us

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The church office will be open Monday through Thursday from 9:00 am - 3:00 p.m. You are welcome to call with questions or concerns or to stop in to discuss your needs in person. Please ring the doorbell and Donna L. will meet you at the door for admittance into the building.



MAY 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 10:30 a.m. GWBU library 6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts loft 7:00 p.m. Choir	2 6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts Loft	3 6:00 p.m. Girl Scout Sleep Over	4 10:00 a.m. Girl Scout Sleep Over Ends
5 8:30 a.m. Service 9:45 a.m. SS, Cat Class, Meet the Con- firmants 10:30 a.m. Mu- sic/Worship 7:00 p.m. AA/Al-Anon	6	7 6:30 p.m. Girl Scouts loft	8 10:30 a.m. GWBU library 7:00 p.m. Choir	9 6:00 p.m. Daisy's Loft 7:00 p.m. Cultural Series	10	11
12 8:30 a.m. Service 9:45 a.m. SS, Cat. Class, 9:45 a.m. Hand Bell re- hearsal 7:00 p.m. AA/Al-Anon	13 Epistle Deadline 6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts S.H	14 7:00 p.m. Preschool Zoom Meeting	15 10:30 a.m. GWBU library 6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts loft 7:00 p.m. Choir	16 6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts S.H. Loft 7:00 p.m. AA Dist. Meets	17	18
19 Pentecost Confirmation 7:45 a.m. Hand Bell Rehearsal 8:30 a.m. Service 9:45 a.m. S.S. 7:00 p.m. AA/Al-Anon	20 6:30 p.m. Preschool gradua- tion Sanctuary/Social Hall	21 6:30 p.m. Girl Scouts loft 6:30 p.m. Council Meets	22 10:30 a.m. GWBU library Preschool E.O.Y. party 7:00 p.m. Choir	23 Teachers last day 6:00 p.m. Daisy's Loft	24	25
26 Food on Fourth 8:30 a.m. Service 7:00 p.m. AA/Al-Anon	27 Memorial Day Office Closed	28	29 10:30 a.m. GWBU library 7:00 p.m. Choir	30	31	