

EPISTLE

MAY 2025



stpaul's

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

117 EAST ARCH STREET

FLEETWOOD, PA 19522

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Return service requested



The Epistle for May 2025

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

From Our Pastor

How Was Your Trip?

"How was your trip?" I've asked quite a few people here at St. Paul's of late. April seems to be a month for vacations, members traveling far and wile... Mexico, Paris, the Netherlands, Alaska, Florida, Ohio and closer to home, the Poconos and the Hersey Shore.

I've been traveling myself. Not on a plane, cruise ship, train or bus; not to other countries or states, but a trip-none-the-less. To Fleetwood, PA!

Though close to home it's a trip like any other, planning an agenda for each day, noting new landmarks, road signs, traffic patterns. "tourist attractions", i.e. places to stop along the way for a meal or a little shopping. I've been learning new places and people names, new customs and schedules. Sometimes it feels like being in a different time zone, even overhearing conversations in a foreign language. I'm gradually putting together a schedule that allows me to avoid rush hours, find alternate routes when advised, noting the times people are in and out of the church and likely to stop by, when standing committees are scheduled and when staff and those in leadership positions are available to meet and most challenging, navigating all these ways we have to communicate! And which ways people prefer. Like any trip, this is an exciting time of discovery and admittedly, a bit exhausting.

Beginning this journey during Lent, Holy Week and Easter was an emersion experience, jumping

into the deep end of the pool rather than slowly testing the waters. This period of the church year calendar entails the most spiritually profound stretch in our church year calendar. It also demands a certain stamina with little time to catch one's breath. I'm deeply thankful for you, my fellow travelers, for easing the way and so cheerfully going about your own ministry tasks while supporting those things that fall uniquely on the pastor. As I write this, so many names come to mind. Though I will not risk naming you in this article for fear of missing someone, please know I am naming you and thanking you in my mind and heart.

You are a dedicated and gregarious group of God's people. You have been on this ride together for some time. As I hop aboard, I hope to be a worthy travel companion. Please remember that what and whom you've known and experienced for years is all new to me. I pray to offer strong leadership while not rocking the boat. Or, at least, not creating big waves!

Traveling with even your closest companions takes good communication, compromise and flexibility. You can't even begin a trip without sharing common interests, a common objective and a hoped-for destination.

Continued on page 2



We can begin by acknowledging our common love for Christ and the church. St. Paul's is one expression of that church and a manifestation of both God's love and your love for God. You have a rich history that deserves to be remembered and honored. That said, I'm excited to talk to you about where we are headed and how we begin that journey into the future. We may not always agree with where that future lies or where we stop along the

way, but in any case, this will be a grand adventure if we remain respectful of one another and understand that God is the captain of the ship.

Ultimately what we are called to be is a reflection of God's Kingdom on Earth and what we hope to be our final destination is our Eternal Home.

Council Corner

Church Council Highlights from April 15, 2025

- There is a smooth transition in the role of treasurer from Cindy Oesterle to Linda Coutts. Council thanked Cindy for her service to our congregation.
- Pastor Fox reported she is having meetings with each staff member and council member to get to know them.
- Pastor Fox alerted council to the fake text and email messages members may be receiving that look like they are from her. NOTE: No one will ever ask you to purchase gift cards or make a cash gift at St. Paul's.
- Preschool graduation is May 19.
- We continue to look for a new Director of Music.
- We will be offering scholarships for high school graduates this year.
- The worship survey results showed 8:30 a.m. as the most preferred time. However, we will continue to look for ways to minister to those who may find it difficult to attend at 8:30 a.m.
- Property committee will complete the lighting project by July.

Scholarships

SPELC is requesting applications for scholarships for those of you beginning your education in trade school, community college, technical school, or a traditional 4-year institution of higher learning. Additionally, there is a special scholarship for those of you pursuing a degree in Nursing. Please submit a one-page essay, including how you contribute to congregational life at SPELC, what and where you intend to study, and why you believe God is leading you to pursue this course of education.

The deadline for submission is **Sunday, June 1, 2025**. Send essay submissions to **Seth Mitten** at sethamitten@gmail.com. Scholarships will be announced **Sunday, June 29, 2025**. Each scholarship may only be awarded once per student. Interested members of the congregation may also contribute to the scholarship fund by marking this on a giving envelope.





Prayer List

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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:

Nathan Essig Connor Geer, Rob Geer, Daniel Keller, Brayden Kiebach, Travis Meck, Lauren Moyer, Sydney Plucker, Matt Roberts, Colin Walbert.

Pray for those in need of ongoing, long-term prayer:

Kathy Boalton, Marion Boyer, Daniel DeLong, Barbara Faust, Essie & Barney Dietrich, Maggie Emerick, Lynnwood Fegley, Dennis Gillner, Nancy Heffner, Maya Hein, Jane Hill, Gene HinnershitzGavin Iradi, Martin Keller, Don Kirby, Sharon

Kirkhoff, Betty Kurzweg, Thomas Lang, Bonnie Loy, Steve Miller, The Neff Family, Ruth Oxenreider, Charles Pinter, Bruce Remmel, Viola Snyder, Mabel Stopp, Frank Vroman, Daisy Wahl, Marie Wessner, Bonni Buss Whitman, Kathy Yoder.

"Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

Luke 12:27

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. Susan Fox can be reach through the church office or at home at(610)743-3554 or by email to: pastor@spelcfleetwood.com

A reminder to please call the church office with any hospital admission, as only Tower Health Hospital notifies our church office and only if St. Paul's Lutheran Church is listed at time of admission.

Up Coming Events

First Communion Instruction

Sat. 5/3

First Communion

Sun. 5/4

Mother's Day

Sun. 5/11

Music Sunday

Sun. 5/18



Opening thought:

Whatever you do, always give 100 percent unless you are donating blood! There is an urgent need for blood donations....actually critical. If you can donate, call Miller Blood Bank for an appointment or to check their mobile unit donation sites. If you've never donated, the personnel will "walk you through". The difference between "try" and "triumph" is a little "umph".

Macular Degeneration Facts:

Please don't smoke as smoking increases the chances of degeneration by 300 times.

Eat fresh fruits and dark green, leafy vegetables. Schedule regular eye examinations and seek medical help if you notice any decline in your vision.

ABC's of Alcohol:

A: Alcohol....Different sizes, various alcohol contents, hard to define.

B: Be mindful of alcohol content

C: Consume in moderation or abstain

Stay safe and responsible.



Get Your Doctor to Listen:

Ask questions, take someone with you, be persistent and change doctors if your doctor is not addressing your concerns.

The medical field has a growing concern regarding the local decline in vaccines for children's rates, since in 2000 some childhood diseases were essentially eradicated because parents felt it was important to protect their children. Among these stats were measles, (often referred to as 3 day or German mea-

sles), mumps and rubella (long term measles, usually combined in one vaccine as MMR. Others included polio, chicken pox, hepatitis B, diphtheria and pertussis (whooping cough).

Various reasons for this unfortunate decline include lack of faith in the medical community, lack of insurance and fear of complications. We are encouraged to discuss vaccines with our medical family doctors, who have accurate information to share and who know your child's medical history. School nurses also have easy access for information as well as state school laws.

Childhood preventative health care visits provide an opportunity to ask questions and to build a child/doctor relationship. Mental health care is important to observe and discuss at every stage as evaluation and early treatment and referral, if needed.

Think Green! One reusable bag equals 600 bags in a lifetime!



Lutheran Senior Services- which owns Lutheran Home at Topton- has been rebranded as **EverTrue**. The new name, EverTrue, reflects the organization's dedication to helping individuals discover the best version of themselves and live life on their own terms.

FAITH: It does not make things easy...
it makes things possible.



**Coffee & Conversation
Sam Borrell Men in Mission Breakfast
Will return in the Fall!**

Cookies at the Cross begins Sunday, May 25!

The Seniors and Friends' Luncheon



Thursday, May 22 at 11:30a.m. will be at Fiore's Italian Family Restaurant and Pizzeria in Fleetwood.

Sign up on the kiosk or call Sharon Neff at 610-657-8727 or 610-944-9820.

You don't have to be a senior to attend. Join us if you have a day off or can fit it in with your schedule.

Special Events & Fundraisers

To sell tickets or raise funds for an event, you must sign up at the kiosk to reserve the table. You can reserve the table for up to 3 consecutive weeks and a maximum of 3 times per year, regardless of the number of events.



MAY WORSHIP HAPPENINGS

WORSHIP AT 8:30 AM EACH SUNDAY

May 4 – Third Sunday of Easter



The disciples make a big splash and eat breakfast with the risen Jesus. Wading in the water (remembering baptism) and eating with Jesus (celebrating holy communion) is our weekly encounter with the risen Christ. Jesus asks us again and again: Do you love me? And Jesus invites us, again and again, to follow him, bringing the Easter life to others.

May 11 – Fourth Sunday of Easter

The gift of new life, of eternal life, is the gift of the risen Christ. It is the promise of Jesus. It was true for Dorcas in Joppa. It was true for those “who have come out of the great ordeal” in the Revelation vision. It is true for us and for all the baptized: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

May 18 – Fifth Sunday of Easter

Easter initiates a new day. It anticipates a new heaven and a new earth. The risen Christ is making all things new. In the mystery of holy baptism God has made new people of us. Today Jesus invites us to see everyone in a new light—through the lens of love.

May 25 – Sixth Sunday of Easter

Visions abound in the readings for the sixth Sunday of Easter. Paul has a vision about what to do. John has a vision of what will be. Jesus provides visions of peace that surpasses human understanding and power beyond human imagination.



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, and we also have 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 Pr. Susan Fox 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 Pr. Fox 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!

Cultural Series Events

Mark Your Calendars!

Sunday, May 18 at 3:00 p.m. Jeff Krick as Elvis Presley Gospel Concert
 Elvis (Jeff Krick) is returning to St. Paul's. His concert was enjoyed by so many, and he will be returning this spring for another Gospel/Country / Concert. Tickets will be on sale after each Sunday service, or you can call Sharon Neff at 610-657-8727 or 610-944-9820. Adult tickets are \$10.00 ahead of time and \$15.00 at the door. Children ages 5 to 12 are \$5.00.



Thursday, May 29, 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Vince's Famous Cheese Steak Truck, Fund Raiser



On St. Paul's parking lot. His cheese steaks are famous in the Lehigh Valley and the Allentown Fair. He will have chicken cheese steaks, sausage sandwiches, hot dogs, French fries, pierogies, and drinks. Why cook dinner when you can get great food and CSE will receive \$1 for every sandwich sold!

Saturday, September 20 at 6:00 pm
Second Chance Ministries, a Southern Gospel Quartet.

In August 2025 we will be selling hoagie coupons for The Shop Eatery, which will be valid from September 2 - October 4, 2025



Special Monthly Offering



Habitat for Humanity

"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.





St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church Bus Trip to the Philadelphia Phillies

A bus trip has been arranged to visit Citizens Bank Park to enjoy an evening of major league baseball. The playoff contending Phillies are returning to Citizens Bank Park for another year of championship baseball!

On Friday, August 1, 2025, a 56 passenger Elite Coach bus will leave the church parking lot at 2:30 PM to travel to the home of the Phillies.

The opponent is the Detroit Tigers. Seats are in Section 327, Rows 6, 7 and 8 (same seats as last year). Game time is scheduled for 6:45 PM. Round trip transportation and entrance to the ballpark is \$90.00 per person. Bus driver gratuity will be an optional, additional expense on the night of the game. Payment is required prior to May 15, 2025 to reserve your seat. Please make check payments payable to Tim Heffner.

Printed game day tickets are no longer available. The Ballpark mobile app is required to receive your tickets. Electronic tickets will be distributed to one person for couples or larger groups. It will be the responsibility of the small group leader to distribute electronic tickets to the individuals in their group.

Individuals, couples or small group leaders must sign-up by sending an e-mail to theffner2@ptd.net and provide the requested number of tickets which will be paid by the person sending the sign-up e-mail. Individuals without the Ballpark app and wanting to attend the game shall contact Tim Heffner by phone or in-person to make specific arrangements.

For additional information, please contact Tim Heffner at 610-944-8197, 610-587-5232 or theffner2@ptd.net.

Food Collections are ongoing!



Now more than ever, food insecurity is a problem throughout our nation and world and in our community. 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.

Mystery Members

Submitted by Melissa Neff

This month's mystery article is about a family of four who have a cat named Callie. Mrs. grew up in Berks County in Riverview Park and went to school in Muhlenberg. Her husband was raised outside of Scranton. They met at a Reading Phillies game when they both worked there. She worked in a concession stand, and he was working as an intern in the front office.

They both went to college in Pennsylvania. He went to Kutztown University for his Bachelors in Business Management, and she went to West Chester University for elementary education and had a minor in math. Then in 2009 she got a Masters in Classroom Technology from Wilkes University.

Mr. works for Schaedler Yesco Distribution as a territory manager. The company is an electrical distributor. Mrs. is in her nineteenth year of teaching at the Daniel Boone Area Primary Center. She taught fourteen years in second grade, and she is in her fifth year as a math specialist.

Mr. and Mrs. have two daughters, one who is thirteen, and one who will be fifteen on May 1. The youngest is in seventh grade at Fleetwood Middle School, and the oldest is in ninth grade at the high school. Both are very active in school. The seventh grader participates in soccer, cross country, basketball, and track, and plays viola in the orchestra, sings in the chorus, dances, and is in accelerated classes. The oldest plays soccer, participates in track and field, takes dance lessons, and plays violin. She is also in accelerated classes.

Mr. and Mrs. have a few hobbies in their spare time. Mrs. jokingly said that she is a taxi driver. She loves reading when she is able, such as romance or mystery novels. He plays golf and takes their youngest daughter along with him.

Their family previously went to the church where Mrs. had gone in Muhlenberg. Then at the time of COVID, the girls did our on-line Bible School in 2020. They then began coming here in 2021.

They are each involved in our church in various ways. Mrs. teaches Sunday School and Vacation Bible School. Mr. is on church council, and his oldest daughter is a youth representative on church council. The seventh grader is an acolyte and is in catechetical class.

They especially love traveling to Disney, and they belong to the Disney Vacation Club. Last year they went on their first Disney cruise. This past February they went to Disneyland. Mrs. said it does not have the same feeling as Disney in Florida. While in California they also went to Hollywood and to Huntington Beach. Two years ago, they went to three of the Hawaiian Islands, they especially liked Maui. About ten sea turtles swam by them there. They also enjoyed Disney's Aulani Resort on Oahu. In addition to Maui and Oahu, they visited the big island of Hawaii.

Do you have any idea who this family is? Find out in June!

April's Mystery Members were the Wyland Family - Jennifer, Sean, Bronson & Lawson & Jackson



What's Happening?

Fleetwood Area School District

SPRING Concerts

Fleetwood High School
 May 8th - Chorus and Jazz - 7 pm
 May 15th - Band and Orchestra - 7 pm
 Fleetwood Area High School

Fleetwood Middle School
 5th Grade - May 12th - 6:30 pm
 6th Grade - May 12th - 7:45 pm
 Fleetwood Area Middle School
 7th and 8th Grade - May 19th 7 pm
 Fleetwood Area High School

Elementary School
 April 29th - AMES 1st and 2nd Grade - 6 pm
 Andrew Maier Elementary School
 May 5th - All 3rd Grade - 6:30 pm
 May 20th - All 4th Grade - 6:30 pm
 Fleetwood Area High School
 May 22nd - WCES 1st and 2nd Grade - 6 pm
 Willow Creek Elementary School

For more information
www.fleetwoodasd.org

Jazz in the Park

Saturday, May 31st
 7pm * Fleetwood Park




Ice Cream available for purchase from: Mister Softee



FLEETWOOD MIDDLE SCHOOL JAZZ ENSEMBLE



FLEETWOOD "CADILLACS" JAZZ ENSEMBLE

In case of inclement weather, the performance will be moved to FW Middle School Auditorium

Editor's Note:

All articles, announcements etc. should be emailed to Gretchen Mertz (Editor) at gkm321@ptd.net or hard copies put in her mailbox in the choir room/library and copied to Donna Locke at office@spelcfleetwood.com.

Thank you,
 Gretchen Mertz

Thank You

Dear Members of St. Paul,

Thank you for your generous gift of \$13,200 to Mission Support.

I love serving as a synod storyteller because I get to share stories of how we are doing God's work.

God Bless your mission and ministry as you love, heal and engage like Jesus!

Blessings abound,

Georgia Suranofsky

Thank You from 100 Families

This winter over 100 adults and children had a warm place to stay thanks to the Opportunity House Code Blue Shelter program. Located in the former convent near the former Central Catholic High School, Eckert House provided a place to live while families experiencing homelessness worked to get back on their feet.

Your donations in the bin located on our lot helped provide clothing for those families as well as families in the shelter in Reading.

We continue to collect donations all year long. Your donations matter. Donations of furniture and household items are always welcome and home pick up is possible.

"As you do for the least of these--you do for me."



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-25</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>YTD</u> <u>Actual</u>
Income		
Non-Preschool M&M	\$ 20,982	\$ 48,283
Preschool M&M	\$ 15,210	\$ 40,952
Total	\$ 36,192	\$ 89,235
Expense		
Non-Preschool	\$ 20,112	\$ 52,639
Preschool	\$ 10,908	\$ 28,714
Total	\$ 31,020	\$ 81,353
Income Less Expenses - Non-Preschool	\$ 869	\$ (4,356)
Income Less Expenses - Pre-school	\$ 4,302	\$ 12,238
Total Income Less Expenses	\$ 5,171	\$ 7,881

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

Simply
giving®

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church

117 East Arch Street
Fleetwood, PA 19522

Office Hours
Monday—Wednesday
9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
(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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Facebook: www.facebook.com/spelcfleetwood

The church office will be open Monday through Wednesday from 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 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 2025

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

				1 6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts	2	3 2-4 p.m. First Communion Instruction Class
4 8:30 a.m. Worship Service 9:45 a.m. Sunday School, Cat. Class, 7:00 p.m. AA and Al Anon	5	6 6:30 p.m. Girl Scouts	7 10:30 a.m. GWBU 6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts 7:00 p.m. Choir	8 6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts 7:00 p.m. Cultural Series	9	10
11 8:30 a.m. Worship Service 9:45 a.m. Sunday School, Cat. Class 7:00 p.m. AA and Al Anon	12 5:30 p.m. Safe Grads	13 7:00 p.m. Preschool Meeting	14 10:30 a.m. GWBU 6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts 7:00 p.m. Choir	15 6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts 7:00 p.m. AA District Meeting	16	17
18 8:30 a.m. Worship Service 9:45 a.m. Sunday School, Cat. Class 3:00 p.m. Jeff Krick in Concert 7:00 p.m. AA and Al Anon	19 5:30 p.m. Bridging Daisies 7:00 p.m. Preschool Graduation Program	20 5:30 p.m. Bridging Daisies 6:30 p.m. Council Meeting	21 10:00 a.m. Preschool EOY Celebration 10:30 a.m. GWBU 5:30 p.m. Bridging Daisies 6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts 7:00 p.m. Choir	22 Preschool Last Day 6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts	23	24
25 <i>Food on the Fourth</i> 8:30 a.m. Worship Service 9:45 a.m. Sunday School, Cat. Class, Cookies at the Cross 7:00 p.m. AA and Al Anon	26 <i>Memorial Day</i>	27	28 10:30 a.m. GWBU 6:00 p.m. Girl Scouts 7:00 p.m. Choir	29	30	31