



“Reformation Now”

At the end of this month of October, the last Sunday, we will commemorate the Reformation of Church with, and within, the world. In 1517, October 31st, Martin Luther nailed 95 Theses up for all to see. So began the Reformation which we, admittedly, as Lutherans, not only commemorate but celebrate, embracing the ever-changing nature of...

The Church, made up of human beings who are imperfect, who are fallible, who make mistakes, who are indebted to God for the grace that is manifest in Christ Jesus by the Holy Spirit and the indwelling of faith as a gift. This Reformation continues. Change, along with God's love, are the only constants in the universe. We believe it. We trust it. Live it!

My article's title "Reformation Now" is meant to evoke the 1979 film "Apocalypse Now" directed by Francis Ford Coppola. Set during the Vietnam War, the movie goes to those dark places inside us. The title brings to mind the end times, the Apocalypse, which is the end of all things, as we understand it, even though that word is really about Revelation.

It is actually an uncovering, a disclosure, much like the Book of Revelation, an eye-opening vision of the future. The end of earthly things, which gets a connotation of being totally horrible, but when, in reality, we look at it, the Revelation is a message of hope. Through it all, God is with us, with you.

Apocalypse now, Reformation now, both could easily refer to this year of 2020. For our Reformation Sunday this year we will have the privilege of confirming five young people in their journey of faith. It was only just begun in their baptisms at ripe young ages and we pray it is a journey that goes throughout their lives.

A journey of Revelation, the journey of eye-opening, a journey of hope, love, and their relationship with God. It is dependent upon God and not upon them so much, despite us lauding their achievements in 'making' their confirmation. It is God's gift of faith, within them, and uniquely manifest for them, which we confirm.

Our lectionary's Gospel reading for the commemoration of Reformation is from John. I yield, however, to the continuous lectionary string of readings from Matthew for the time after Pentecost so on that day will read that.

But, as you can see from the John text below, there is much to celebrate, so much to know, and so much more to inquire about, as we move forward in our faith. We witness, represent, and reflect the love of God in Christ Jesus for the world.

³¹Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; ³²and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." ³³They answered him, "We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone. What do you mean by saying, 'You will be made free'?"

³⁴Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵The slave does not have a permanent place in the household; the son has a place there forever. ³⁶So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed." – John 8:31-36 (NRSV)

Freed to Change,
– **Rev. Paul Downing**

***St Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church**

309 Patchogue Road, P.J.S. NY 11776

Office Phone: 631-473-2236

Cell Phone/Text: 347-423-3623

E-Mail: pastorpauldowning@yahoo.com

Deacons Gale Capone, Stu Meade, Johnny Slade

David Voss, Organist & Choir Director

Website: www.StPaulsLCPJS.org

<https://www.facebook.com/stpaulselca>

*St. Paul's ELC is part of the Metropolitan New York Synod www.mnys.org of the Evangelical Lutheran Church America (ELCA) www.elca.org.

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DEACON'S CORNER

“Better is the end of a thing than its beginning: the patient in spirit are better than the proud in spirit.” Ecclesiastes 7:8. This is the Bible verse I started off my letter to Bishop Egensteiner on September 1st letting him know that as of October 1st, 2020, I will be retiring as a Synodical Deacon of the Metro NY Synod (and, therefore, your first ‘retired’ Deacon). As I explained to him, why I picked this verse, is that all through my 20 years of being a Synodical Deacon, I have learned so much, more than I knew in the beginning and yet still have so much more to learn.

In the last few months, I have gone through much prayer, discernment, and yes, tears, to come to this decision. I take the words of “Minister of Word and Service” very seriously. As a Deacon of Word, I have preached, led Bible studies, and have tried, and I emphasize tried, to live by God’s word. As a Deacon of Service (and as a member), I have served St. Paul’s for 50 years and will continue to do that. I feel I don’t need a title to serve the church that I love. My reason for retirement has to do with my service outside the church and to the community. I have been a Pastoral Care visitor at Mather Hospital for 27 years and have done nursing home/adult home worship services/Bible studies for over 20 years. Because of Covid, I have not been able to do any of this and for many reasons, will not go back to this even if things get better. I feel so strong that a Deacon’s ministry should be outside the church and because this ministry which I feel I have a gift for will not continue, I have decided to retire.

It took a while, but I have peace with my decision. Covid has changed all of our lives a lot. I’m not going anywhere but now instead of being the ‘Senior’ Deacon, I can be ‘Deacon, Retired’! So according to Ecclesiastes, “the end IS better”.

Blessings,
– **Gale**

PS: The picture above [at left] is of me and Deacon Gayle Ruege, Assistant to the Bishop. We attended diakonia together 22 years ago and have been friends ever since. We shared lunch together recently as we hadn’t seen each other in such a long time. My thanks to her for caring and friendship!

A Message from our Council President:

Thank you to our Saint Paul’s Members!

I hope this finds you and your loved ones well as we navigate through these challenging times and continue to pray for the good health of our church, our fellow citizens and the recovery of our nation!

First let me thank Pastor, Deacon Gale Capone, David Voss, Scarlett, and Deacon Johnny Slade and his family for provided online services for us at home at the beginning of this Pandemic.... You brought church to us, and we will be forever grateful for the opportunity to worship through this very difficult and frightening time!

Your Council is dedicated to making sure we do all possible to keep everyone healthy as we worship together safely in person after being physically apart for so long. Thanks to Deacon Johnny Slade for sifting through all the Synod and NYS Policies and Procedures to be sure we met every safety requirement. Lucky for us, he was quite prepared since he needed to follow these procedures for his own office to stay open and was well aware of what needed to be done to plan for everyone’s safety. This greatly streamlined our organization of this very important task.

Thanks go to our Council members, who voted to move forward with planning in person services, while seriously contemplating and working through all the rules in place to gather together. Council added their assistance to four separate committees formed in order to work on procedures to provide options for our congregation members and took the action to plan each of our services with safety in mind.

Thanks also to all who responded to Pastor’s survey and offered to help by joining committees, working together with Council to complete this involved undertaking! Thanks also to all who continue to work hard organizing, setting up, and cleaning up before and after our inside and outside services! We couldn’t do all of this without you!

A special thank you to David Voss, who stays with us all day on Sunday to provide beautiful music and singing for both services! We are so grateful for his dedication to our congregation and worship services!

(Message continues on page 3)

October, 2020

From the Treasurer's Desk September 30, 2020

We have completed 9 months of our fiscal year and have 3 months remaining. Our finances continue to be in fairly good shape. Thank you to everyone who continue to contribute regularly. Some of our income areas are out of line this year because of Covid-19. Our expenses are falling into line in most of our categories. As we progress into the last quarter of the year, and more of our income and expenses become more normalized, I feel that we should again end the year with a balanced budget.

We have received so far gifts of \$1,831 toward our reopening expenses of \$3,711. If you would like to contribute to this, simply mark your check memo line with "reopening" or indicate this in your Vanco contribution. Or place your contribution in a separate envelope marking it "reopening expenses".

I have paid 75% of our Mission Support commitment to our synod and do not see a problem meeting that commitment. Our mortgage amount to Thrivent has been paid in full. We will be paying down the small business loan over the next several years and should save considerable interest. The Change for Change program will continue this fall with any funds collected passed through to the Parish Resource Center [Parish Resources for Churches].

Our normal giving categories of current, facility use, and plate are currently down 10% from our projections. Our plate contributions are down a considerable amount because of our changes in services. My hope is that the money we received from the paycheck protection plan will convert from a loan to a grant.

Respectfully submitted,
Stu Meade (Deacon)
Congregation Treasurer

Operation Christmas Child 2020

National Collection week is Nov. 18th to 25th. I realize how difficult it is for some to wear masks to shop so here's an option. Provide a monetary donation, including the shipping fee of \$9, for me to do the shopping. Please make checks to St. Paul's and indicate it is for Operation Christmas Child. We will do the shopping and fill the box for you. If you prefer to fill a box, they will be available in the back of the church. Boxes must be returned by Sunday, Nov. 15th so I may bring to processing center Nov. 16th.

Thank you, **Carol Fazio**
"Every Child's Dream"

This is a local, family run charity. More info to come. Contact point person Diane Cook (Borriello) at artemis123@optonline.net if you may be interested in providing gifts for local homeless children's families.

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(Message continued from page 2)

For those who still feel uncomfortable worshipping in person, we continue to also offer our Live and filmed services online, which can be reached through our website or Facebook account. We look forward to seeing you again when you are ready to join us!

As the weather gets colder and it gets darker earlier, we will need to adjust how we gather for our second services on Sunday. We will continue to keep you informed as we adjust to altering situations.

Please continue to wear a mask when out of your home, and don't forget social distancing and washing your hands often. Together, we will safely get through this very difficult time.

Shalom,
Pat Force
Council President

Rules in Effect at All Services

- ✓ Maintain social distancing, 6 feet between groups.
- ✓ Wear masks at all times (except eating the bread).
- ✓ At welcome desk, have temperature taken, answer questions, and confirm contact info for tracing.
- ✓ Receive hand sanitizer and Communion wafers in wax paper envelopes. Follow Greeter instructions.
- ✓ Singing and spoken responses are done by the worship leaders (you may hum or whisper).
- ✓ Share the peace softly or flash a 1960s peace sign.
- ✓ Communion consecrated and shared contact free.
- ✓ No physical contact between separate groups.
- ✓ No collection taken. Offering plates are available.
- ✓ Rest rooms will be sanitized after each use.

In the Sanctuary 9:30 a.m.

- 1) Please call church phone if you plan to attend.
- 2) Enter Parking Lot from Maple Av or Bergen Pl.
- 3) Enter church through Breezeway door from Lot.
- 4) Welcome desk is inside, in the Breezeway.
- 5) Pew seating is limited, ushers will guide you.
- 6) Bulletins are placed in advance at your seats.
- 7) After service, ushers guide you out rear doors.

In Parking Lot 5 p.m. (Nov. 12:30 p.m.)

- 1) Please bring your own chairs if at all possible.
- 2) Enter north side only, via Maple. Bergen is closed.
- 3) Park in designated area, proceed to welcome desk.
- 4) Welcome desk is in the center of the Parking Lot.
- 5) Receive your bulletin at welcome desk.
- 6) Sit in an empty seating area designated with an 'S'.
- 7) Cancellation info will be on the church's phone 2 hours prior to each outdoor service, day of.

☺ *Not ready to come? We understand! Church is still on Facebook Live and the website from 9:30 a.m. on!*

October, 2020

SERMONS FOR OCTOBER, 2020

(Available at the Sermon link on our web-site or on YouTube.)

October 4th – The parable is a tough one on this 18th Sunday after Pentecost. If the wicked tenants Jesus speaks of in **Matthew 21:33-46** are actually representative of us, as it is of the leaders of Judea, then and there, then **“WHAT ARE WE THINKING?”** Your Pastor Downing, finally, looking around at the world of 2020, and how we are behaving, amidst these stressful times, sees Jesus' point. Division, fear mongering, hatred, disgust, stubbornness, and intolerance reign. Bring back compassion!

October 11th – More slaves are being abused, mistreated, and killed in this week's parable. Rev. Paul's sermon title could be “Really, What Are We Thinking!” The banquet is prepared, a feast for the wedding of the Son, and those who are invited spurn the gracious invitation. As if **Matthew 22:1-14** wasn't strange enough, the king's open, welcoming, door is called into question when one guest isn't wearing the wedding robe they were given. They are tossed out. Why do we insist on going **“IN THROUGH THE OUT DOOR”**? Works don't earn us anything to be smug about, it's grace!

October 18th – **“WHOSE HEAD IS THIS?”** Rev. Downing's sermon is based on **Matthew 22:15-22**, where Jesus asks that brilliant question of two groups attempting to trap him. “Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar?” A ‘yes’ would alienate the Pharisees' disciples and a ‘no’ would have the Herodians, loyal to their sellout puppet king in league with Rome, in an uproar. There are two kingdoms. Live and participate in both, but remember only one is eternal. Look at the First Commandment and the Fourth, check with our Confirmation Class of 2020. As citizens in this country we vote. As aliens in this world we do so with extra consideration.

October 25th – Reformation Sunday, but we're sticking with **Matthew 22:34-46** as our Gospel text. Here we have another one of Christ Jesus' memorable answers to a trick question from the people in charge of all the God talk. “Which commandment is the greatest?” Jesus then takes the opportunity to get them, and theologians across time and space, to consider just who the Son of God might be. Law and legalism don't always jive. Pastor Paul's sermon is **“TWO COMMANDMENTS & A DILEMMA”**.

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Stewardship Column

October, 2020, Foundation

It's been said before here at St. Paul's, but it bears repeating: All that we have belongs to God. We are just managers who don't have to fret and worry about the everyday things of life as others do. At least, that was the Lord's admonition in Matthew 6 when he said, “--- Do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ For it is the unbelievers who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

When we do that—when we really strive first for God's kingdom by placing him first in our lives and in our desires—then God provides what we need. When that happens, our lives are like beacons shining before others who see how God provides for us and give him the credit.

One of the hardest areas for some people to put God first in their lives is that of their money. Oh, they will seek God first when it comes to prayer. They'll put him first in terms of attendance at church or Bible reading. But, when it comes to money, forgetaboutit. After all, they reason, money is not that important in the overall Christian life.

Unfortunately, that conclusion is not supported in God's word. Jesus certainly thought money was important. Half of his parables deal with money and material possessions. In fact, there are more Scripture verses that talk about money and material possessions than there are verses dealing with heaven and hell combined. This is an important issue that needs to be kept before us.

As you and I ask God what we should give to him, and as he burdens our hearts concerning what we should do, we can obey his leading with the full confidence that He will provide all that is needed. You see, money is the only subject that God says, “Prove me. Try me. Put me to the test.” When we do that by putting Him first in our lives, including our giving, and when we step out by faith in obedience to His leading, He will provide.

As you consider how God has blessed you, and you look to him to direct you concerning your giving in the future, will you put Him first? Will you make the advancement of His ministry here at St. Paul's a priority in your life? As you consider what God is directing you to do concerning your financial support of St. Paul's, please remember these words of the Lord Jesus: “---Strive first for the kingdom of God and His righteousness.”

October, 2020

St. Paul's Regular Weekly Schedule:

***Due to COVID-19, Sunday services have special protocols in place and limited seating. Go to www.StPaulsLCPJS.org for details and links.**

****Weekly Sunday a.m. inside service Facebook Live at 9:30 a.m. posted for any time thereafter.**

Go to www.facebook.com/StPaulsELCA

*****Weekly Sunday Outdoor service in Parking Lot 5 p.m. October 12:30 p.m. November bring chair. Weather cancellation call church 2 hours before.**

******To attend Zoom events: click "Join a Meeting" enter Meeting ID listed in the Calendar below.**

Go to www.zoom.us or call (646) 558-8656

*******Welcome Friends & area restaurants give out free to-go meals for the hungry, out of St. Paul's parking lot at 1 p.m. Monday through Thursday.**

October 2020 Events

- ♥ Peconic Conference clergy monthly meeting 10 a.m. Thursday 10/1 via Zoom. 11 a.m. Pericope.
- ♥ "St. Mark's Bread" Food Pantry THURSDAYS at Hope L.C. in Selden opens at 11 a.m. to receive donations and gives out groceries to all in need from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. Thu. 10/1, 8, 15, 22 & 29.
- ♥ Prayer Group is at 10:30 a.m. EVERY FRIDAY via Zoom (Meeting ID 800-555-016) 10/2, 9, 16, 23, & 30. Contact Pastor Paul or Deacon Gale to add or remove names from the Prayer Lists.
- ♥ Time after Pentecost services on Facebook Live with Communion in-person in the sanctuary 9:30 a.m. & in the Parking Lot 5 p.m. 10/4, 11 & 18.
- ♥ Confirmation Class 4 p.m. Tuesdays via Zoom (Meeting ID 800-555-016) 10/6, 13 & 20.
- ♥ Protestant Campus Ministries (PCM) Board Meeting at 8 a.m. Wednesday 10/7 via Zoom.
- ♥ Men's Bible Study on Peter's N.T. letters is at 10:30 a.m. EVERY WEDNESDAY via Zoom (Meeting ID 977-887-967) 10/7, 14, 21 & 28.
- ♥ Pinecrest Alumni 7:30 p.m. Wed. 10/7 via Zoom.
- ♥ Peconic clergy Pericope Bible study 10 a.m. to 12 noon Thursdays 10/8, 15, 22 & 29 via Zoom.
- ♥ Mary Martha Bible Study Judges 17+ 10:30 a.m. Tue. 10/13 via Zoom (Meeting ID 125-248-952).
- ♥ St. Paul's "Liquored up Lutherans" Social Time is at 7:30 p.m. 2nd & 4th WEDNESDAY via Zoom (Meeting ID 914-0960-9098) 10/14 & 10/28.
- ♥ Worship & Music Committee 7:30 p.m. Thursday 10/15 via Zoom (Meeting ID 800-555-016).
- ♥ Baptism of Thaleia LaFata 9:30 a.m. Sun. 10/18.
- ♥ Church Council Meeting 7:30 p.m. Tuesday 10/20 via Zoom (Meeting ID 947-1121-2826).
- ♥ Port Jefferson Ecumenical Clergy Association (PJECA) meeting 12:15 p.m. Thursday 10/22.

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- ♥ Reformation Sunday service on Facebook Live with Communion in-person in the sanctuary at 9:30 a.m. & in the Parking Lot at 5 p.m. 10/25.
- ♥ Rite of Confirmation for Evan B, Marcus D, Jillian M, Justin M, and Taylor R at 5 p.m. Sun. 10/25.
- ♥ Mary Martha Bible Study Judges 17+ 10:30 a.m. Tue. 10/27 via Zoom (Meeting ID 125-248-952).

November 2020 Events

- ♥ All Saints Day services Sunday 11/1 Facebook Live with Communion in-person in the sanctuary at 9:30 a.m. and in the Parking Lot at 12:30 p.m.
- ♥ Reading of names of deceased loved ones for All Saints Day during both services on Sunday 11/1.
- ♥ PCM Board Meeting 8 a.m. Wednesday 11/4.
- ♥ Men's Bible Study 2 Peter then Gospel of Peter 10:30 a.m. Wednesdays 11/4, 11, 18 & 25.
- ♥ Pinecrest Alumni 7:30 p.m. Wednesday 11/4.
- ♥ Peconic clergy 10 a.m. Thursday 11/5.
- ♥ "St. Mark's Bread" Food Pantry Hope Selden 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Thursdays 11/5, 12 & 19.
- ♥ Prayer Group 10:30 a.m. Fri. 11/6, 13, 20 & 27.
- ♥ Time after Pentecost services Sundays 11/8, 15 & 22 Facebook Live with Communion in-person sanctuary 9:30 a.m. Parking Lot 12:30 p.m.
- ♥ Mary Martha Bible Study 10:30 a.m. Tue. 11/10.
- ♥ Worship & Music 7:30 p.m. Tuesday 11/10.
- ♥ St. Paul's Social Time 7:30 p.m. Wed. 11/11.
- ♥ Pericope 10 a.m. Thursdays 11/12 & 19.
- ♥ PJECA meeting 12:15 p.m. Thursday 11/12.
- ♥ Filled Operation Christmas Child boxes are to be returned by Sunday 11/15 (see article page 3).
- ♥ Interment of Dorothea Carkhuff's ashes at Calverton Nat'l Cemetery 11 a.m. Mon. 11/16.
- ♥ Church Council 7:30 p.m. Tuesday 11/17.
- ♥ Annual Port Jefferson Ecumenical Thanksgiving Prayer service Mon. 11/23 has been cancelled.
- ♥ Thanksgiving Eve at St. Paul's will be Facebook Live (no in person) at 7:30 p.m. Wed. 11/25.



QR Code for giving to St. Paul's:

St. Paul's is a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) Metropolitan NY Synod. The ELCA Mission Statement: "Marked with the cross of Christ forever, we are claimed, gathered and sent for the sake of the world." www.elca.org & www.mnys.org

Office 631-473-2236

Cell 347-423-3623

Rev. Paul Downing, Pastor

pastorpauldowning@yahoo.com

www.StPaulsLCPJS.org

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309 Patchogue Road
Port Jefferson Station
NY 11776