

Pastor's Corner

Pastor:

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Church Council

President and Fellowship:

Heather Tuckfield

Vice President and Worship & Music:

Marianne Drumm

Recording Secretary/Fellowship:

Alison Poltorak

Christian Education: Sara Wetz

Financial Secretary: Glenn Hollenbeck

Church Treasurer/Memorials:

Mick Thistle

Finance Chairperson/Social Ministry:

Greg Maxwell

Youth Representative/Design: Rick Ruhf

Evangelism: Jonathan Aseltine

Memorials: Mick Thistle

Property: Tim Doyle

Chair, School Board: Molly Michaelson

Youth: Tony Tuckfield, Elizabeth Haroth

President Emeritus: Steve Raabe

Is it just me, or is the world going crazy? As the final month of 2015 draws close, I've been reflecting on how things seem to be more polarized than I can remember ever being the case in my 51 years on this earth. This year has been marked by racial and political tensions (off the charts); by evil manifesting itself in jihadi idiots creating murderous havoc; by international politics that seem to get (exponentially) more complex with each passing day. Our world is a mess!

When I start to feel this way though, I take a deep breath and remind myself that it's been like this for a long, long time. Take, for example, Israel around what we call AD zero...when Jesus was born. The people there had lost their freedom hundreds of years before and they lived a miserable existence under the thumb of occupying troops and a brutal dictator. The local puppet king (Herod) was paranoid and ruthless. The religious types were often hypocritical and did more harm than good. Common folks suffered greatly as helpless pawns in a taxation system that robbed them of dignity and hope.

So, in many ways we have a kinship with our forbearers from ancient Israel...and probably most other eras of human history where sinful people have made a mess out of God's world.

But when we're feeling this way about things...we are much closer to understanding the magnitude of what actually happened when Jesus was born. The stark contrast is "starker" when we lean into December with a mindfulness of the brokenness of humanity. Because into the chaos and violence and grief - God came. The Divine light of love visited a world consumed in darkness and madness because God cares about us. God didn't want us to live this kind of existence so the Messiah came to save us from sin and death.

We know that the world didn't treat him well. In time, he suffered the worst that this planet can dish out when he died an innocent man on a criminal's cross. But through that death, something new came. Resurrection. The all-powerful Word that brings, not only hope of eternal life, but also hope of a new way to navigate in this messy world. In fact, because of Him our lives (frail though they be) can actually dispel the darkness. Amazing! And it all starts with Christmas. God with us - Emmanuel. God in human flesh. The light came to people who had before walked in darkness.

I pray that you will slow down to receive this gift again this year. I pray that you will keep a good Advent so you are ready for the gift of Christmas. **On Christmas Eve we will worship at 4 pm (a special kid-friendly service); 7 and 9 pm services of carols, candlelight, communion, with brass. Then on Christmas morning we celebrate with a quiet service at 10 am.** Each of these will be beautiful as we remember that that Love has come to us. We need this love. Our world needs it too, so I pray you will immerse yourself in our faith family where He is worshipped and His Good News is made known without ceasing. I hope to see you in church soon.

- In Christ's Love, Pastor Dave+

Adult Forum

On December 6, 13, and 20, Paula Thistle will be leading the Sunday morning Adult Forum (9:00 - 9:45 am in the Library Lounge). Paula will be teaching about rich themes of Advent and why these matter to all of us. All are welcome; we encourage you to join the conversation.

Watch Your Email Inbox

Advent is a holy season of preparation. We are called to worship, pray, and commit ourselves to acts of service and love. To help us along the Advent way this year, Peggy Eastman again gives a lovely gift of poetry to inspire us. Each week in Advent, those on our e-blast list will receive a poem written by Peggy. We invite you to read it, reflect on it, and carry it with you as you contemplate the mystery and joy of these holy days. We pray it will strengthen your spiritual disciplines as we all seek to follow our Lord more closely and be fortified in His grace as we seek to serve him. Special thanks to Peggy for her offering of love.

Speaking of e-mail, if you are not receiving our weekly e-Announcements, please contact our church office so we can update or add your address.

Church Directories Coming Soon

Many folks have been asking about the status of the church directory. Our new software has presented a few "speed bumps" that have slowed us down a bit. However, we expect to have the directories before Christmas comes. Thanks for smiling...and for being patient!

Congregational Meeting

Our next Congregational Meeting will be held on January 10th after the 10 am worship service. We hope you'll be present as we vote on the 2016 budget and celebrate how God's Holy Spirit continues to bless us at St. Martin's.

First Communion Classes

Parents please note: dates for 1st Holy Communion Classes will be on January 17, 24, and 31. Our young people will receive the sacrament for the first time on February 7th (Transfiguration Sunday). More to come...

Germany Trip

Pastor Dave is leading a Footsteps of Luther tour (also going to Prague, Vienna, Salzburg, and Munich) next July 11th-22nd. So far about two dozen people have registered and there is still room for YOU! This trip will bless you as you learn more about the Protestant Reformation, our brother in faith, Martin Luther, and also see some of the most majestic cities and scenery anywhere. Brochures are available in the narthex or by speaking with Pastor Dave.

Holiday Sharing

St. Martin's is sponsoring ten families through the county's Holiday Sharing Program for Christmas this year. We will provide gifts for the children along with a holiday meal. Information about each family is located in the hallway off the narthex. If you would like to purchase a gift for one of the children, please take a tag from one of the family cards. There are three tags for each child. Some suggestions for gifts are provided by Social Services and are listed on the family card. Please wrap your gift and attach the gift tag. All gifts should be returned before the church service on **December 13th**. Gifts can be placed in the library/lounge. We are also in need of ten individuals or families to deliver food (or a \$50 food gift card) and gifts to each of the families. If you are interested in helping deliver food and gifts, please contact Barbara Freeman at 410-798-6612 or e-mail: tombarb.freeman@verizon.net

*****HOLIDAY PRINT + PRODUCT orders*****

Season's Greetings, Everyone! Now is the time to get your holiday print and product orders in!

If you contacted me previously about placing holiday print and product orders, please navigate to the online store (mkt.com/rasphotography) to place your orders with your photo file number typed in the comments box. If you haven't contacted me already about ordering, my Print + Product catalog is attached to browse all of the wonderful gifts we can make out of your photos! **All PRINT orders must be in by Dec 15th. All PRODUCT orders must be in by Dec 10th.**

Your **directory gallery link** can be found here: <https://goo.gl/photos/h9g5Mt7uEdDW2WN29>

-Rachel Sale

Christmas Dedications

Christmas is a time of hope and joy, and an opportunity to reflect on all the rich blessings God has given us. Dedications for poinsettias to beautify our sanctuary and/or gifts to our homeless and hungry neighbors will be received through Sunday, December 6th. The cost is \$14.00 per plant. Poinsettias may be picked up by donors after the 10 am worship service on Friday, December 25th. **Please return your dedication and payment to the church office by the December 6th deadline so it can be included in the bulletin.**



Please complete the entire form.

Dedication to read as follows:

of plants ordered: _____

PLEASE FILL OUT THIS SECTION!

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Your envelope number: _____

I would like to offer the following:

- For our homeless and hungry neighbors
\$ _____
- For dedication of poinsettias
\$ _____

NOTE to Sunday tellers: Please initial here _____
to verify receipt of payment.

Music Ministry News

Children's Choir Rehearsals continue after worship for 15 - 20 minutes up until Christmas for special music planned for **Dec. 14th and 24th**. Now is the time for all kids to join us!

Don't forget our annual **Christmas Candlelight Concert on Sunday December 13th at 4 pm**. We know you will enjoy this hour of family entertainment and reflection amidst the chaos of the holiday season pace. Professional tenor, **Tim Augustin** (Pastor Dave's cousin's husband) will be joining us (and may be bringing along a few of his friends). A free-will offering will be accepted at this concert.

St. Martin's Flying Quilters

The quilt group will have their annual Christmas lunch at Judy Houston's house on **December 7th**. Our next regular meeting will be January 11. We would love to have some new members join us. Questions? Contact Judy Houston at djhouston1@comcast.net or 410-263-3888

Adult Fellowship – Yankee Gift Swap Christmas Party Friday, December 18

Please join together for an evening of fun and fellowship at the home of Heather and Mel Tuckfield on Friday, December 18th at 7:30 pm. This is your chance to re-gift, reuse or recycle that present you just don't know what to do with – or perhaps you have some hidden treasure in your basement or closet that needs a new home. Just wrap it up and bring it with you for a fun "Yankee Gift Swap". Please don't purchase anything new for our gift swap. If you've never played this game, you're in for a treat. If you have, then you know it's a lot



of fun. In addition to the wrapped gift, please bring an hors d'oeuvre to share. Wine, beer and non-alcoholic beverages will be provided.

Social Ministry Opportunity -- Help Refugees by Donating New or Used Baby Carrier

We are supporting a former St. Martins School student's service project (Sophia Gassman) during Advent. She is seeking donations of any new or used soft baby carrier with straps such as Ergo, Bjorn, etc. If you'd like, pin a note to the recipient with a paper clip. If the carrier has a pocket, you may stuff it with items such as infant/children's socks and mittens or a small plush toy. Carriers collected will be hand delivered to families arriving in Europe via Carry the Future, a grassroots organization of volunteers. So far, we have we have made three trips and are gearing up for a fourth mission. Donations will be accepted until mid-January. Sophia Gassman is leading the donation drives in Annapolis and can be reached at shg4mx@virginia.edu. For more information on Carry the Future, visit their Facebook page at facebook.com/carrythefuture.

Memorials

There were two new memorial funds opened in November. They will stay open for a period of three months when a suitable memorial will be designated.

Donations in memory of MARGARET SMITHFIELD MASON have been made by the following persons: Philip and Marsha T. White, Don and Joyce Dority, George H. Houghton, Tommy and Linda Rye, and Gail Andrews.

A donation in memory of LOUISE GEBELEIN has been received from Jean L. Gates. The Memorials Committee thanks these generous donors for their contributions to St. Martin's Evangelical Lutheran Church Memorials.

Submitted,
Faye S. Wetherhold
Chair

Message from the Endowment Fund

*It's the most wonderful
time of the year.
With the kids jingle bell
and everyone telling
You "Be of Good Cheer!"
It's the most wonderful
time of the year.*

There is something about the Advent and Christmas seasons that brightens everyone's disposition. Maybe it is the spirit of giving. Of all of God's gifts to us, his son Jesus may have been the most important gift of all. We are of Good Cheer as we anticipate and celebrate his birth.

As you put together your Christmas gift list, please remember the Endowment Fund. While money is always welcome, there are other gifts such as stocks, bonds, or real estate which are not to be overlooked. The fund is the perfect vehicle for gifts that keep on giving. The fund has no overhead, and every dollar contribution goes directly into the fund. As the fund grows, more resources are available to do the Lord's work in the St. Martin's community. Moreover, any donations made before December 31 qualify for a tax deduction. It's a win – win!

Submitted by Larry Laubscher



Birthdays and Wedding Anniversaries

If your birthday or anniversary is not listed here, please provide the church office with the information so you can be included next time!

Birthdays

Dan Kolakoski	12/3
Kevin Althoff	12/5
Ashley Markowski	12/7
Rebecca Canning	12/9
Beverly Lyall	12/11
John Filer	12/12
Lloyd Ritter	12/12
Keith Stoltzfus	12/13
Dan Laird	12/15
Anna Marie Humphrey	12/18
Jutta Butler	12/19
Lydia Hegel-Huhn	12/19
Sigi Beecher	12/21
Paul Traher	12/23
Susan Budney	12/27
Doug Hole	12/29
Marianne Drumm	12/30
Susan McCahan	12/30
Tony Tuckfield	12/30

Anniversaries

Lee & Sarah Gatchel	12/4
Jesse & Charlene Brogan	12/5
Ben & Kristin Blomendahl	12/18
Robert & Barbara Brock	12/22
Mel & Heather Tuckfield	12/29
Pr. Dave & Sandy Oravec	12/30

A winter scene with snow-covered trees and a white banner. The banner contains text for a Christmas Candlelight Concert.

Christmas Candlelight Concert
Sunday, December 13, 2015 at 4 pm

Please make time with family and friends to attend our annual concert featuring adult, children and bell choirs along with guest musicians for an hour of family enjoyment, carol-singing and reflection. Free-will offering to support our concerts.

St. Martin's Evangelical Lutheran Church
1120 Spa Road, Annapolis, 410-263-4723, stmartinsannapolis.org

Reminders for December

- Sun., Dec. 13** 10:00 am – Sunday School Christmas Pageant during service
4:00 pm - Christmas Candlelight Concert
- Fri., Dec. 18** 10:30 am - School Christmas Program ...all are welcome!
- Thurs., Dec. 24** 4:00 pm - Christmas Eve Children's Service
7:00 pm – Candlelight Communion Service with Brass
9:00 pm – Candlelight Communion Service with Brass
- Fri., Dec. 25** 10:00 am - Christmas Day Service with Communion

Mark your calendar-- there will be a **congregational meeting after church** on **January 10th!** We hope you'll save the date!

Blood Drive at St. Martin's

January 15th from 1:00 to 6:30 pm in Fellowship Rooms A, B and C. For more information, please contact Ches at 410-268-4756 or sueches4@comcast.net.



Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

Calendar Rev. 12/1/15
Please continue to check our website's **News & Events** tab for any new updates.

December 2015

1

8:40 am Chapel
10 am Staff Mtg
5:45 pm Bell Choir
6:30 pm Choir

2

3:30 pm School Game Night

4

9 am School Pajama Party

5

1 pm Orthodox Church

6

8 am Worship
9 am Ed. Hour/Confirmation/SS Pageant Rehearsal
9:15 am Choir
10 am Worship
11:15 am Children's Choir
12 pm Christmas Caroling

7

10 am Flying Quilters-Lunch at Judy's
5 pm Light House Shelter Dinner
7 pm Adult Bible Study

8

6:30 pm YSC Meeting @ the Lings

9

8:40 am Chapel
10 am Staff Mtg
5:45 pm Bell Choir
6:30 pm Choir

10

8:30 am School's Holiday Gift Shop
3:30 pm School Game Night
6:30 pm YAG Party

11

8:30 School's Holiday Gift Shop
7 pm School Christmas Dance

12

1 pm Orthodox Church
5 pm SHY - Boat Parade

13

8 am Worship
8:30 & 11:15 am - Youth Cookie Sale
9 am Ed. Hour/Confirmation/SS Pageant Rehearsal
9:15 am Choir
10 am Worship; SS Christmas Pageant
11:15 am Children's Choir;
2 pm Concert Rehearsal
4 pm Concert

14

7 pm Adult Bible Study

15

7 pm Church Council - Pr. Dave's Home

16

7 am Men's Bible Study
8:40 am Chapel
10 am Staff Mtg - Pr. Dave's Home
7 pm Choir

17

3:30 pm School Game Night

18

10:30 am School's Christmas Pageant
7:30 pm Yankee Gift Swap - Tuckfield's

19

1 pm Orthodox Church

20

8 am Worship
9 am Ed. Hour/Confirmation
9:15 am Choir
10 am Worship
11:15 am Children's Choir

21

School Closed
7 pm Adult Bible Study

22

School Closed

23

School Closed
7 am Men's Bible Study
10 am Staff Mtg
7 pm Choir (tentative)

24

Christmas Eve
School Closed
4 pm Children's Service
7 pm Candlelight Service with Brass
9 pm Candlelight Service with Brass

25

Christmas Day
10 am Service

26

1 pm Orthodox Church

27

8 am Worship
9:15 am Choir
10 am Worship

28

7 pm Adult Bible Study

29

30

31

<u>Ongoing Events</u>		
Sunday	10 am	Orthodox Church (B)
	7:45 pm	AA (A, B, and C)
Monday	3 pm	Extended Day Prg (Art & G)
Tuesday	3 pm	Extended Day Prg (Art & G)
Wed	10 am	Staff Meeting (CF)
	3 pm	Extended Day Prg (Art & G)
	6 pm	Cub Scouts (G)
	7:30 pm	Boy Scouts (G)
	7:45 pm	AA (A)
Thursday	3 pm	Extended Day Prg (Art & G)
Friday	3 pm	Extended Day Prg (Art & G)
Saturday	4 pm	Orthodox Church (B)
12/15	6:30 pm	Girl Scout Daisys



LUTHERAN CHURCH OF ANNAPOLIS

1120 SPA ROAD ANNAPOLIS, MD 21403

St. Martin's Evangelical Lutheran Church

1120 Spa Road, Annapolis, Maryland 21403

410-263-4723

E-mail: Church@StMartinsOnline.org

Web site: StMartinsAnnapolis.org

The Rev. Dr. David G. Oravec, Pastor

chapsdo@gmail.com

Education Hour: 9:00 a.m.

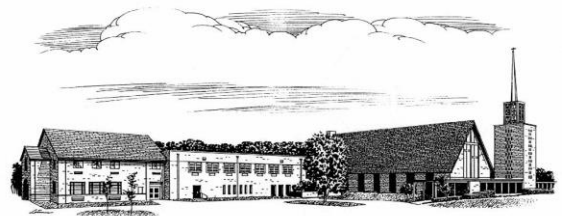
Sunday Worship: 8:00 & 10:00 a.m.

St. Martin's Lutheran School

Pre K 3's through Grade 8

410-263-8016 or 410-269-1955

Mr. James D. Moorhead, Principal



**St. Martin's Mission Statement:
Welcoming all and growing together
to share God's love and serve Christ
with energy and joy!**