

Super Bowl Stromboli Sale

Our CRT team is back and we are selling SUPER BOWL STROMBOLI from Liscio's!



To make your Super Bowl party a big hit, we are partnering with Liscio's to sell their stromboli, which can be picked up after church on Super Bowl Sunday, February 9th.

The stromboli (price TBD) are available in the following varieties:

- Ham & Cheese
- Pepperoni & Cheese
- Spinach & Cheese
- Cheesesteak

Payment in cash or by check is due when you pick up.

We all know that delicious stromboli start with the bread, and Liscio's is the best in the area. So plan to add a stromboli to your Super Bowl party menu and also to order some for your family and friends. Thanks so much for your support!

Order online or in church. See Mary Ann for more info.



Used Clothes Help the Sunday School

Please donate your used clothes and household items to the Sunday school through January 26! Collections will be every Sunday, drop off before 12 p.m. We are working with Bargain Thrift Center in Philadelphia.

below please make sure they are in closed trash bags and closed boxes. Please leave your items on the back ramp.

Thank you all so much for your donations!

When donating the materials

Elaine Luoma

We **DO ACCEPT** the following items:

- CLOTHING AND SHOES - All sizes (men's, women's, children's and babies') styles, and seasons of clothing and shoes (sandals, boots, sneakers and dress shoes).
- ACCESSORIES - including pocketbooks, purses, totes, school bags, backpacks, wallets, belts, ties, scarves, hats gloves.
- HOUSEHOLD LINENS - blankets, bedspreads, comforters, quilts, bed sheets, towels, shower curtains, window curtains and draperies, tablecloths, pillows.
- SOFT TOYS - stuffed animals and dolls.
- HARD TOYS (smaller than 24"x24"x24") and GAMES
- HOUSEWARES kitchen, office, garage, decorative & holiday items 24" or smaller.

We **DO NOT** accept the following items:

- FURNITURE OR MATTRESSES
- ELECTRONICS OR APPLIANCES
- WET, SMOKE DAMAGED OR MILDEWED ITEMS
- BOOKS
- RECORDS



St Paul's will be hosting the Red Cross Blood Drive on:

Friday, January 31, 12 - 5pm
Friday, February 28, 12 - 5pm

Our nation's blood supply is fragile. There is a significant need for blood donors! All blood types are in high demand. Please consider donating at this or any local drive.

Contact the Red Cross at 800-RED-CROSS or at www.redcross.org to schedule your appointment today!

Prayer REQUESTS

ALL Prayers:

For our country
 For peace
 For all those in the world who are hungry
 For everyone who is ill
 For those affected by war
 Family and friends of Elaine B
 Kathie S ongoing cancer treatment
 Sharon R cancer treatment & tests
 Elaine W chemo done now radiation
 Logan S many medical issues
 Janet B at home waiting for God's will
 Cameron always needs prayer & family
 Matt H young man had stroke & family
 B family loss of wife mother grandmother
 Family attacked by a dog
 Dave X hip replacement surgery
 Those alone or in pain during holidays
 Pastor Val health issues & Glenn
 Noah multiple serious injuries
 Someone with severe anxiety
 Denise C cancer back in both lungs
 Doug S setback after surgery
 Tom W spinal neck surgery
 Diane W hip replacement
 Len H clot around chemo line
 Tommy baby with RSV in hosp
 Kathy W breathing problems
 Jim hosp stroke & Kathy
 John R on hospice
 Tom & Mike J mother passed
 Tyler S sprained ankle/foot
 Nick K hosp cardiac issues
 Emily lost baby girl at birth
 Ann W cancer
 Laurie K lost husband
 Dottie D health issues
 Family & friends of Robert W
 Carol M & family lost cousin

Caren U lost sister on Tgiv day
 Family & friends of Sheryl Sandy D severe UTI & house probs
 Pastor Dave praise finished radiation
 Carol M new leg/ankle/knee problems
 Steve M recovering from neurosurgery & Gerry
 Family & friends of David K MJ and Mike lost close friend
 Patty M bad test news thyroid
 Liz cancer treatmt had stroke
 Dolores continues cancer trtmt
 Evelyn supporting friends w cancer
 Don T problems w good ear
 All traveling for holidays
 Michael N praise home from military
 Linda W broken leg
 Our new Bishop Cynthia M-K-K
 Barb tests
 Patty & Dave F praise for anniversary
 Sandy D worried about family
 Family of Dr. Harvey K
 Family of Rosemarie S
 Jackie C appt w surgeon

Every week: All those in need, unspoken requests, all service men/women, our nation and leaders.

Ongoing Prayer Concerns: Joyce N., Gerry M., Janet B., Kathie S., Sharon R., Elaine W., Cindy F., Logan S., Dave D.

Serving in the Military: Michael Nahas, Caitlyn Um, Erynn Plasket, Dan Solano, Chris Yard, Rachel Rachuba, Donna Rachuba, Ed Schwebel, Brandon Howell, Shaina Serrano

Shut-Ins & Nursing Home Residents: Janet B., Rosie P., Mary B., Gloria L., Sue T., Bernice N.

January Birthdays & Anniversaries

2- Aleyna Rutter
 4- David Bailey
 4- Norm Branyan
 4- Michelle Wright
 7 - Jessica Loveland
 7 - Trista Jones
 10- Kurt Toppin
 11- Lillie Marie Gogolin
 12- Kenny Domeraski
 13- Joyce Nuneviller
 14- Daniel Domeraski
 16- Laurie Schwebel
 17- Kim Gibson
 17- Brandon Rutter
 17- Diane & Joe Wonsetler
 19- Meghan Beidle
 20- Matt Dechen
 23- Francis Jabathy, Jr.
 25- Dottie Davenport
 25- Patty Fish
 25- Jackson Merckx
 26- Nadia Domeraski
 30- Kathleen Spellman
 31- Logan Dugan

February Birthdays & Anniversaries

3- Melissa Strock
 3- Diane Weems
 10- Joanne Keegan
 10- Don & Carol Strock
 11- Ginny Gibson
 16- Vince Lee
 16- Selene Jones
 19- Emily Bailey
 20- Donna Sierocinski
 21- Rosalyn Platt
 22- Shannon McLaughlin
 23- Evelyn Dallas
 23- Joe Hoffman
 24- Bert Turner
 25- PyperLin Gittinger
 26- Jennifer Spinella
 27- Wendy Gittinger



BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION: Some of the men's breakfast gang celebrated Norm Branyan's 80th birthday. Norm will be 80 on January 4.

THE LAMPLIGHTER

Bimonthly Newsletter of
 St. Paul's United Methodist
 Church, PO Box 125, West
 Deptford, NJ 08086
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 Phone (856) 845-6638
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Sunday Morning Worship: 9:30 a.m.
 Sunday School: 10:45 a.m.

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We Praise You, God!

“We praise you, God, we praise you, for your Name is near; people tell of your wonderful deeds.” Psalm 75:1

SRO

I think the first time I heard a reference to SRO it was the name of an album performed by Herb Alpert and the Tijuana Brass. I wonder how many of you remember their music? Back when I was a child it seemed that I was purchasing every one of their albums and I didn't know what those initials meant. But I do now.

STANDING ROOM ONLY S.R.O., which pretty much explains the condition of our church sanctuary twice recently and frankly it felt so good to sense the energy of that rainbow reflection of God's neighborhood! I paused to watch the smiles and the hugs or handshakes that were shared. People gathering together IN CHURCH for a church service where, yes, we would read Scripture, sing to God, and a message would be preached.

Once upon a time having a filled church was not an unusual phenomenon, but these days it is a rarity. People find excuses to not come to church, and they even have excuses to not worship online, which we make very easy to do.

The truth about our church, which is an energetic and vital church doing amazing work in the community, is that we are perhaps only one-third filled on most Sundays. On Christmas Eve



amongst the standing room only crowd were faces that I haven't seen in a long time and some strangers too. Obviously, I was not surprised that I didn't know many of the folks who came to celebrate Elaine Blair's life, but they too filled our church's sanctuary.

I know that many of you were very invitational this past Christmas season! Many of you included our Christmas invitation cards in with your Christmas cards and some of you placed the cards in restaurants or other businesses. After all, it was Christmas, and we definitely wanted people to worship with us on Christmas Eve, right?

But what about Sunday, January 19th? Don't we want our family members, our friends, our neighbors, our co-workers, or some of our members who don't come to church very often ... don't we want them to worship God with us on that Sunday? Or in February and March? Do we value our weekly worship as much as we value inviting people to worship so that they can hold a candle in the dark?

I believe in 2025 that our little church in West Deptford can grow. I believe we need to grow and that we offer those living around us with a unique place to worship God and Jesus Christ where everyone is always welcome with love and where we worship with joy!

I believe that we can help make the world a better place in our own way by encouraging others to worship God with us. Perhaps they'll help with the Food Pantry or start a new Bible Study. Maybe they will become regulars at Red Bird, helping us make the lives of those living in one of our nation's poorest counties better.

God has told us that where two or more are gathered in God's name that God is there for our worship moments. But as a church, we are stronger when we are growing. So join me in a commitment to invite others to come to worship with you in the coming weeks! And be ready to take some posters about our church to businesses you visit and to hand out cards to your friends.

I hope you would smile along with me if on a Sunday not called Christmas Eve it would be hard to find room to sit. SRO ... wasn't Christmas Eve awesome?

Blessings,
Pastor Dave

Outreach

Welcome 2025!!

Upcoming Mission Projects & Offerings

- **January**
 - ◇ Our first Sunday offering (Jan. 5) will benefit Human Relations Sunday.
 - ◇ On the third Sunday (Jan. 19) the offering is for Blanket Sunday.

Church World Service began in 1946 when 17 denominations came together to form an agency "to do in partnership what none of us could hope to do as well alone." The mission: Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, heal the sick, comfort the aged, shelter the homeless. Blanket Sunday is a CWS outreach.

- **February**
 - ◇ Our first Sunday offering (Feb. 2) is for our St. Paul's Food Pantry.
 - ◇ On the third Sunday (Feb. 16) we will be supporting Family Promise.

Our food pantry and Family Promise are both important mission projects of our church and we hope you will give generously.

Many thanks to all of the St. Paul's family for your generous outpouring of support to our Mission Projects. We remain a community of love for all.

Cheri Clement



Family Promise Changes

Jesus said... "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." Matthew 8:20

Yes, that's right! Jesus was homeless. He relied on the generosity of friends and strangers to have a place to lay his head.

At St. Paul's we open our hearts to homeless families through the Family Promise program. Family Promise helps homeless working families achieve sustainable independence through a community-based response. They operate four transitional homes to house families for a few months so

they can save money for permanent housing.

Three weeks a year our volunteers provide meals for families in the program. But now, rather than cooking, we are supporting the families with gift cards. Please sign up to donate a ShopRite or restaurant gift card to support this mission project.

Our next week is February 23. Watch for our signup link, coming soon to the website, or see Gary or Sharon Rutter to sign up.



CHRISTMAS CAROL SING was fantastic! So much joy!
Thanks to Patty & Dave Fish!



GUIDING LIGHTS celebrated Christmas with a dinner at the Piston. These ladies have taken over many leadership positions for St. Paul's and are always working on all the various activities of the church. Thank you all for your faithful service!



RADIATION BLANKET: We are happy to report that PD completed his radiation treatment and rang the bell! The Sunday School presented him with a special blanket to use, since it can be cold in the radiation tube. Thanks to Donna Ski for taking the lead on this!



OLD FRIENDS: It was so good to welcome Mike and Tiffany Daly and their boys for our Christmas Carol Sing and Ice Cream Social! We thank Mike for playing his trumpet along with our carol singing. It added so much to the festivities!



The Methodist churches of West Deptford, National Park and Westville joined together on Sunday, November 24th for our Community Thanksgiving Eve Worship Service. The service was at First United Methodist Church of National Park. Kathy Mander and Carla Branyan sang two lovely duets, "The Wonder of It All" and "Count Your Blessings," a favorite of many people.

His Name is Shiloh

**“Those who exploit the powerless anger their Maker, while those who are kind to the poor honor God.”
Proverbs 14:31**

Our church family has again demonstrated what a loving and caring church we are. When I shared the story of Todd, Crystal, and Shiloh the immediate response was “how can we help these individuals and their beautiful dog who are living in the woods near us in Gloucester County?” Not a single person used words of judgment nor of condemnation. The only comments I heard were ‘how can we help.’

Sadly, we live in a time where individuals can easily slip and end up without the means to rent an apartment or own a home. The so-called “safety net” has been obliterated and it is a difficult climb to get on one’s feet once you have slipped.

In the coming weeks, I am going to be meeting with clergy and faith leaders in an attempt to create better opportunities for people living in poverty in our community like Todd



and Crystal. We need to find ways to keep couples together and to allow them to have pets like Shiloh. I am going to ask for your prayers and your support.

Believe me, I am not going to abandon nor forget about these three you have embraced this Christmas season. You provided them with the amazing Christmas gift of a warm hotel room for four nights and with hot meals, which they had not had in a long time. Shiloh has been given treats and a supply of dog food. Crystal has a new warm coat and we have found a heating system for their tent. I will be working with Todd to get him identification

papers and with Crystal to resolve the issues with her Social Security. Once Todd gets back to work, they will be able to save money for the security deposit that is needed to rent an apartment. Slowly they will begin the move back out of the woods.

Todd and Crystal are looking forward to the day they can come to church. Todd is wondering if Shiloh can come too, and I think that would be doable.

They still need food, which some of my friends have been helping with, but you can help too. They need prayers; so does this “mission” I feel God wants us/me to take on, so please pray.

We live in the wealthiest nation in the world, but we refuse to care for the poor and homeless. Somehow, I think that goes against everything Scripture teaches. So together let’s keep loving and caring for those who are struggling. Maybe we can make a difference here in our back yard.

Blessings,
Pastor Dave

Frequent Laughter

“He will fill your mouth with laughter and your lips with shouts of joy!” Job 8:21



So, do you want to laugh? Perhaps I should ask, do you need to laugh? I certainly hope that

you love to laugh because I certainly do! Laughter embraces the inner soul in a way that no other expressions do and brings joy into that unique and totally identifiable sound that is a laugh!

Comic and movie star Charlie Chaplin once said that “a day without laughter is a day wasted.” Mark Twain wrote, “the human race has one really effective weapon, and that is laughter.” And one of my favorite comics John

Cleese said, “a wonderful thing about true laughter is that it just destroys any kind of system of dividing people.”

I enjoy telling people that the church family at St. Paul’s loves to laugh together during worship services. Perhaps we enjoy it so much because frequently laughter comes unexpectedly to all of us. It certainly is a special feeling when the congregation is laughing together. And we are fortunate to have Dave Fish with his collection of ‘knock-knock’ jokes that he tells the children... but I really think he is targeting all of us.

Back when COVID hit I decided to have a daily devotional moment on our FACEBOOK page. On the second day, a Tuesday, I decided to be funny by playing the piano. The response from

people watching was instantaneous ... ‘Pastor Dave, can you be funny again tomorrow?’ And that started what is now my daily “PD@930” on our FACEBOOK page.

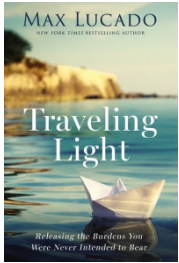
“PD@930” led to my “IN THE KITCHEN” cooking lesson every Friday at 9:30 on our FACEBOOK page and ‘THE SATURDAY MORNING FUNNIES,’ which are of course shown on Saturday mornings at 9:30. My brother has even become part of the FUNNIES by sending me a joke each week for the BROTHER MARK JOKE of the WEEK.

You can imagine how many jokes we have told since April 2020 as part of the SATURDAY MORNING FUNNIES.

Continued on pg 9

Women's Bible Study

The Women's Bible Study will begin again on Wednesday, January 15 at 10:00-11:30 a.m. in the church sanctuary.



Our new book is "Traveling Light" by Max Lucado.

The cost of the book is \$15.00
Please see Patty Fish to get your copy.
We look forward to getting back together again!

WHAT'S HAPPENING



BEAUTIFUL MUSIC: Thanks so much to all our church musicians for your efforts, and especially to Bela Debrecei, our music director. We enjoyed a flute concert, a flute soloist, our choir, and many special music pieces.

MANY THANKS to Beverly Betz for making the beautiful new Advent altar cloth and donating it to the church. It is a gorgeous applique and embroidery nativity scene. Thanks, Bev, for so generously sharing your talent to make our worship services more beautiful!



ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING was beautifully done by both new and old friends of the church. Shown, from top left, are: Hartnett family, Jean Soderlund, Kathie Spellman, Francis & Shaniqua Jabathy and baby Francis, Mikayla Wright, and Mike & MJ Minder. Thank you all!

Children's Ministry



The Drone Pastor

**“Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known.”
Jeremiah 33:3**



The first call took me by surprise; “Pastor, do you think

these drones are a message from God?” Within hours of that first call about these mechanical flying machines more inquiries started in person, by text, and over the phone, all thinking that I have a special insight into this odd phenomenon of mystery drones that seemed New Jersey centric. So I decided that I have a new title ... “The Drone Pastor.”

What do people call you, or when do they call you? Do they reach out to you because you are an expert in plumbing? Are your recipes sought after? Are you the ultimate source of quality information? What are you known for?

As we enter into the new year, I would like each of us to consider whether or not our friends, our family members, our co-workers, or our neighbors think of us when they want to discover truths about God or about the teaching of Jesus Christ. No, I am not suggesting that all of you should become pastors, but then again, I didn’t become a pastor until I was in my late 40s.

However, as Christians perhaps it is time that we reset our faith connection to God to an ACTIVE button rather than leaving it in pause. As people who identify ourselves as Jesus believers or followers I would hope that each of us would like to be identified as people who understand some of what God expects as taught by Jesus. We have a resource that is even accessible on our cell phones called The Bible where we can read Jesus’ words, which tell us what God expects from us.

I am going to preach a sermon series to start the new year focused on our need to “RESET.” Coming out of the Christmas season it’s easy to make the

choice to pack our faith away along with our Christmas decorations. As I have discovered more clearly over the last two years, a disconnect with our faith can have a dramatic impact on our life’s journey.

The women of our church have an awesome Bible study, and our Wednesday evening group is stronger than ever, but I would love to start a men’s Bible study or a Sunday morning study group right after church. When we open up our Bibles there is an immediate reset, bringing us closer to God, which allows us to better sense the Holy Spirit’s directions.

So are you ready for a RESET in your faith life? Are you ready to make 2025 the year in which your faith becomes a priority? Do you have the courage to have your friends, family and neighbors think of you when they have a question about God or Jesus?

By the way, the drones are not from God ... I know that much about them.

Pastor Dave

Continued from pg 6

I am pretty sure that there have been very few repeats but that’s because people keep sending me jokes or jokes from famous comics. So as we approach the start of our fifth year of doing the SATURDAY MORNING FUNNIES I need more jokes so please send me your jokes. Send them by e-mail to pdatstpauls@gmail.com.

And if you want to laugh or need to laugh just tune in on a Saturday to our FUNNIES or watch PD@930. You can find the video’s on St. Paul’s Facebook page. Some of the jokes are hilarious and others are groaners, but that’s the way jokes turn out.

I look forward to laughing with all of you soon!

Pastor Dave



Our annual Church Conference had a great turnout on November 18, with thirty members and friends present. The potluck supper was fantastic, with so much food you couldn’t fit it all on one plate! We were led by District Superintendent Rev. Glenn Conaway. This was his last charge conference as he is retiring next year. We wish Pastor Glenn well in his retirement. It was a wonderful celebration of our ministry, and we also elected officers and chairpersons, approved the pastor’s salary, and reviewed reports.

St. Paul's Calendar

January-February 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 9:30am Worship First Sunday after Christmas	30	31 New Year's Eve	January 1 New Year's Day 7:00am Holy Communion 7:00pm NA Mtg	2	3	4 8:00pm AA meeting
5 9:30am Worship 10:45am Sunday School 11:00am Soup Sunday Human Relations Sunday Offering 2nd Sunday after Christmas	6 Epiphany 6:00pm Girl Scouts - General meeting	7 9:00am Food Pantry setup HH 10:00am Deptford Designers	8 7:00am Holy Communion 8:30am St. Paul's Food Pantry 6:00pm Trustees Meeting 7:00pm NA Mtg 7:30pm Evening Bible Study Zoom	9 7:00pm Choir practice	10	11 8:00pm AA meeting
12 9:30am Worship 10:45am Sunday School 1st Sun after Epiphany	13 6:00pm Girl Scouts - General meeting	14	15 7:00am Holy Communion 10:00am Women's Bible Study 7:00pm NA Mtg 7:30pm Evening Bible Study Zoom	16 7:00pm Choir practice	17	18 8:00pm AA meeting
19 9:30am Worship 10:30am Megan's Pretzel Sunday 10:45am Sunday School 11:00am Guiding Lights Brunch Out Mission: Blanket Sunday 2nd Sun after Epiph	20 Martin Luther King Day 7:00pm Leadership Team	21 9:00am Food Pantry setup HH 10:00am Deptford Designers	22 7:00am Holy Communion 8:30am St. Paul's Food Pantry 10:00am Women's Bible Study 7:00pm NA Mtg 7:30pm Evening Bible Study Zoom	23 7:00pm Choir practice	24	25 8:00pm AA meeting
26 9:30am Worship 10:45am Sunday School 3rd Sun after Epiph	27 6:00pm Girl Scouts - General meeting	28	29 7:00am Holy Communion 10:00am Women's Bible Study 7:00pm NA Mtg 7:30pm Evening Bible Study Zoom	30 7:00pm Choir practice	31 12:00pm Red Cross Blood Drive	February 1 1:00pm Girl Scouts - World Thinking Day Cultural Celebration 8:00pm AA meeting
2 9:30am Worship 10:45am Sunday School 11:00am Soup Sunday Food Pantry Offering 4th Sun after Epiph	3 6:00pm Girl Scouts - General meeting	4 10:00am Deptford Designers	5 7:00am Holy Communion 10:00am Women's Bible Study 7:00pm NA Mtg 7:30pm Evening Bible Study Zoom	6 7:00pm Choir practice	7	8 8:00pm AA meeting
9 9:30am Worship 10:45am Sunday School 10:45am Super Bowl Stromboli Sale 5th Sun after Epiph	10 6:00pm Girl Scouts - General meeting	11 9:00am Food Pantry setup HH	12 Lincoln's Birthday 7:00am Holy Communion 8:30am St. Paul's Food Pantry 10:00am Women's Bible Study 6:00pm Trustees Meeting 7:00pm NA Mtg 7:30pm Evening Bible Study Zoom	13 7:00pm Choir practice	14 Valentine's Day	15 8:00pm AA meeting
16 9:30am Worship 10:30am Megan's Pretzel Sunday 10:45am Sunday School Mission offering: Family Promise 6th Sun after Epiph	17 Presidents' Day	18 10:00am Deptford Designers	19 7:00am Holy Communion 10:00am Women's Bible Study 7:00pm NA Mtg 7:30pm Evening Bible Study Zoom	20 7:00pm Choir practice	21	22 Washington's Birthday 8:00pm AA meeting
23 9:30am Worship 10:45am Sunday School Family Promise Week 7th Sun after Epiph	24 7:00pm Guiding Lights HH	25 9:00am Food Pantry setup HH	26 7:00am Holy Communion 8:30am St. Paul's Food Pantry 10:00am Women's Bible Study 7:00pm NA Mtg 7:30pm Evening Bible Study Zoom	27 7:00pm Choir practice	28 12:00pm Red Cross Blood Drive	1 8:00pm AA meeting