

# The South Grey Bruce Lutheran Parish

## THE MESSENGER - APRIL 2021

Contact Info:



**Pastor Pamela McNeil**

Email:

sgblparish@gmail.com

pam\_mcneil@hotmail.com

Cell: 226-751-6398

Pastor's Blog:

www.sweetlutheran.com

### Worship Sundays at 10am

#### Congregations

St. Matthew, Mildmay

St. Paul, Neustadt

St. Paul's Normanby



### Parish Church School

Fridays from 7:00-8:00 pm

St. Paul's Neustadt

Is currently not running

### From the Pastor's Desk

Our youngest grandson just turned 5, and we had a video chat with him as he opened the gift we sent him. He had already received some of his favorite style of toys – Lego, robot stuff, and had eaten several slices of rainbow birthday cake, so we did not have high hopes for an enthusiastic response to the gift we sent.

We sent some gardening tools and seeds and knew it was something he would enjoy, but it wasn't stellar beside all the other things. He surprised us with sincere happiness and appreciation.

This little lad is #3 in a family of 4 children, and with two older brothers he usually tries to be loud and forward to get his turn. In the special moment of his birthday attention, his true character shone brightly.

May you be blessed with similar moments to be truly who you are. May the world treat you gently and graciously and appreciate all the God given gifts you have to offer.

*For it was you who formed my inward parts;  
you knit me together in my mother's womb.  
I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.  
Wonderful are your works;  
that I know very well. Psalm 139:13-14*

Pastor Pam



# Upcoming Congregational Events

## Confirmation Classes

Confirmation class began in January. Youth born in 2007 and earlier are invited to these interactive confirmation classes to explore their Lutheran roots as well as their faith and relationship with God in today's world.

Some families have been contacted, but if I have overlooked someone in your family, please contact Pastor Pam to be added to the communication list. Our April class is scheduled for April 11, 2021, 12:30-2:30 at St. Paul Neustadt.

The classes continue to be arranged within Covid safety guidelines.



*Stewardship is .....*

*..... a Joyful Acceptance*



"Our religion is not a struggle to develop our spiritual resources in order to rise to his (God's) level. It is a joyful acceptance of the divine resources to which we have access because he has descended to our level... The keynote of this Christ centered theology is grace... We do not have to bargain with God: if I do this for you, will you do this for me? We do not have to buy his favour. It is he who has already bought us with a price... He has already given us the status of sons and daughters."

(T.A. Kantonen, A Theology for Christian Stewardship - Philadelphia, Muhlenberg Press, 1956-p 8)

**New envelopes will not be provided this year.  
Please use your 2020 envelopes for your offering.**



Five years!!!! Wow, it's hard to believe I have now been your Newsletter Editor for five years. When I first read about the available opportunity, I was sitting near the back of the church at St. Paul's Normanby, scanning through the bulletin, waiting for the service to start.

I looked at my Mom and said, 'Maybe I could do that'. Thinking back on it now, I'm surprised she didn't fall off the pew in shock.

My name was put forward to Parish Council and there was discussion about whether or not I could be effective given I live 3 ½ hours away from the Parish, just outside of Peterborough. There didn't seem to have been a lot of applicants for the role so I was selected as the successful candidate...can you see my 30-year career in Human Resources peeking through here? 😊

Over the past five years I have reported on a wide variety of activities the Parish has supported, fundraised for and celebrated. There have been four Pastors and church services have rotated through different buildings, sometimes not even churches at all (the Rhody Farm, the Neustadt Community Centre and most recently in our homes watching recorded services). 20% of that time has been spent living through a pandemic. Who would've thought? Over the past 5 years I can't even begin to imagine how many people in South Grey Bruce have benefitted from the generosity of the members. Endless potatoes have been planted, mittens have been knitted and pies have been baked to support many causes; all of your 'wonderful works', ~*Psalm 139*, that have touched the lives of others and will continue to do so.

One thing however has remained constant. We have all continued to be Lutherans, celebrating our faith and our love of God. I do appreciate that you continue to humour me by reading my editorial as I provide snip-its of my life. I have been fortunate to be able to enter your lives each month. Thank you to the many who have sent kind words of gratitude my way. They have made the job enriching. I haven't helped plant potatoes, supplied a pair of mittens or baked a pie but perhaps this newsletter might be my 'wonderful works'. See you in May!

## Bible Book Club for April: the book of Amos

Date	Passage	Date	Passage
<b>Apr 1</b>		<b>16</b>	Amos 3:9-15
<b>2</b>		<b>17</b>	Amos 4: 1-5
<b>3</b>		<b>18</b>	
<b>4</b>		<b>19</b>	Amos 4:6-13
<b>5</b>		<b>20</b>	Amos 5:1-17
<b>6</b>	Amos 1:1-5	<b>21</b>	Amos 5:18-27
<b>7</b>	Amos 1:6-8	<b>22</b>	Amos 6:1-14
<b>8</b>	Amos 1:9-10	<b>23</b>	Amos 7:1-9
<b>9</b>	Amos 1:11-12	<b>24</b>	Amos 7: 10-17
<b>10</b>	Amos 1:13-15	<b>25</b>	
<b>11</b>		<b>26</b>	Amos 8:1-14
<b>12</b>	Amos 2:1-3	<b>27</b>	Amos 9:1-10
<b>13</b>	Amos 2:4-5	<b>28</b>	Amos 9:11-15
<b>14</b>	Amos 2:6-16	<b>29</b>	
<b>15</b>	Amos 3:1-8	<b>30</b>	

### Background

Amos told an opponent that he was not a prophet but a farmer, who raised sheep and tended fig trees. Though he may not have been part of a prophetic guild that served the king, he speaks in the language of a prophet. His arguments are among the most well-constructed of all the prophets, and his elegant use of the Hebrew language is rivaled only by the psalmists. Amos' prophecies date to the first half of the eighth century B.C.E., making him one of the earliest of the prophets whose writings appear in the Bible.

### The Message of Amos

Amos clearly announces God's concern for justice. Properly observing worship practices, festivals, and sacrifices had little meaning if the people did not treat others with justice and righteousness. Even though the people of the northern kingdom lived in a time that was relatively peaceful and prosperous, they used their wealth for personal comforts, not to help others. Unfair business practices and oppressive taxes that squeezed the poor were common.

### QUESTIONS:

The earliest prophetic writings express a certain understanding of land and its proper use. Are you able to identify the basic elements of the writer's understanding? Does it differ from yours?

- Amos is speaking out in response to a growing threat. Does the situation being identified resemble our own? Is Amos' message instructive for us?
- Amos is pretty direct and adamant that if the people keep with their social injustice and arrogance that God will punish them with military disaster. Noting that Amos' prophecy was fulfilled with the fall of Israel some 40 years later, is this how God operates?
- Amos appeals to long held traditions and beliefs. What are they? Do they differ from the traditions and beliefs we still hold today?
- In Amos 5:21 we read, "I hate, I despise your festivals, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies." What does this verse say about our worship services? Why?
- Amos 5:24 reads, "But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." This verse was often quoted by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and others in speeches about problems such as racism. What does this verse mean to you?
- Who are they modern day prophets that are speaking the same message as Amos?

