

Greetings St. Paul Lutheran Church!

I wanted to start today with a God story. One of my favorite flowers is the forget me nots that often grow wild. Sometimes I forget the name of them and call them “Remember Mes.” They represent a promise that you will always remember someone and you will keep them in your thoughts. I actually put some forget me not seeds in our yard so we could get some. A few weeks later all of our neighbors had them but we didn’t. I hope they liked them as much as we do 😊. But this week a patch of forget me nots appeared in our yard and today would have been my grandma’s 94<sup>th</sup> birthday. To me, it’s just a little reminder of God’s grace and love through my grandma.

Sunday continue our “We’re From Everywhere!” worship theme with the states of New York and New Jersey. We will be outside for the service so remember to bring a sweater or jacket as it may be a little cool in the morning. If it rains, we will go inside in the sanctuary. After worship we’ll have a fellowship time with favorite treats from New York and New Jersey. I’ve heard of many treats coming like bagels. Hope to see you there.



This last week we celebrated Victor Lundy’s 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. The ECLC students, church members, and community architect fans sang happy birthday to him and then gathered in the fellowship hall for cupcakes. We were able to tell about our campaign for the education building renovation and give tours of the sanctuary too. It was also the VPK students 100<sup>th</sup> day of school so they had 100 crowns that worked perfectly for the celebration. It was a great time.



February is Black History Month. Our Synod has a team called, “Just Love.” **The JUST Love team is composed of lay and rostered leaders in our synod working toward racial justice, authentic diversity and JUST LOVE.** They have put out a series called, “Lutherans You Should Know in Black History.” They present four outstanding African Americans who made a difference in the Lutheran Church. Their stories are not widely known, but they made significant impacts to the church. Each week I will share a bit about each of these people.



Jehu Jones Jr., **the first African American Ordained Lutheran Pastor**, was born in Charleston, South Carolina on September 4, 1786 to slave parents, Jehu Sr. and Abigail Jones. Jones’ parents were freed in 1798.

Jones was originally affiliated with the Episcopal Church but, finding himself increasingly drawn to Lutheranism, around 1820 he became a member of St. John’s Lutheran Church in Charleston. With the encouragement of his pastor, the Reverend John Bachman, Jones traveled to New York to be ordained by the New York Synod in 1832 as a missionary to Liberia to help freed slaves transition to that country. However, when Jones returned to Charleston after being ordained, he was briefly jailed for violating a law prohibiting freed blacks from returning to a state they had left.

After his release Jones moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and in June 1833 the Pennsylvania ministry decided that he should be appointed “to labor as a Missionary... among the colored people in Philadelphia under the direction of our Ministers.” On February 16, 1834, the St. Paul’s congregation that Jones founded decided to build a church with the help of other Lutheran congregations. Four months later Jones purchased two lots on 150 S. Quince Street for the church to be built. Assisted by Pastors Philip Mayer of Philadelphia and Benjamin Keller of St. Michael’s Church in Germantown, Jones laid the cornerstone for the building. The first congregation of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church was composed of twenty impoverished black Philadelphians.



Take care and God bless

-PrAshley