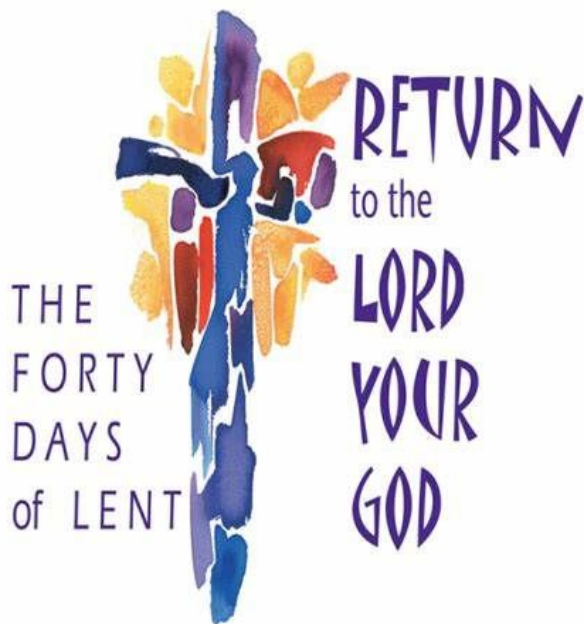




THE EPISCOPAL MESSENGER

FEBRUARY 2024

SAINT PAUL'S AND CHRIST MEMORIAL



"I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word." (BCP Ash Wednesday Service)

Have you thought about how you will observe Lent this year? Lent doesn't begin until Wednesday, February 14th, so you have a bit of time to consider the way YOU will observe Lent.

Do you have the same way of observing Lent year after year? Perhaps you haven't observed Lent in a formal way in the past but want to this year. I would like to share some ideas for taking a fresh look at how we might observe a Holy Lent.

Self-examination and repentance: In our weekly Confession of Sin, as well as the prayers we offer on Ash Wednesday, I love the inclusion of the words: *"we have sinned against you in thought, word and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone."* I don't believe that any of us are always aware of the ways we have sinned. Sometimes we have sinned because we said words that didn't express the unconditional love of our neighbor. Perhaps we meant to do something, but we forgot. This prayer covers all those things.

We most often have a communal Confession of Sin, followed by the Absolution. During Holy Week you can set an appointment with me for private confessions and absolution if you prefer to do that. Whether you choose the communal confession and absolution or the private option, I invite you to have a time of self-examination prior to or in the beginning of Lent. Perhaps you keep a journal and choose to make notes there, or perhaps you are a list maker and prefer listing your sins that you identify.

The gift of this prayer is that we don't have to acknowledge every sin we have done over the past year, but instead we do the best self-examination we can with the knowledge that we can't remember every detail. Another way of taking a self-

examination can be found in a book, *Perfectly Yourself* by Matthew Kelly. This book is a journey to discover God's dream for you and your life in a world of consumerism and "the pressure to fit in with the crowd." It helps us to find those things that make us unique.

"God's dream for you and me goes so far beyond what the world has to offer. He made each and every single one of us wonderfully unique, and he dreams that we will chase, embrace, and celebrate all he created us to be: the-very-best-version-of-ourselves." – excerpt from the book

Prayer and meditation: There are many Lenten Daily Devotionals available. Perhaps you would like to try a new one. I have used several of them myself. There is a *Dayspring* book which includes meditations for the weekdays of Advent, Lent, and Easter. The Easter meditations include all the weeks of Eastertide.

Last year I found that *Witness at the Cross* by Amy Jill Levine book was a wonderful new way to look through the lens of each of the witnesses to Holy Friday that Deacon Jim and Susie used in the Adult Education classes. In addition to that, I found the book, *Blessed is She: Living Lent with Mary*, by Tim Perry to be a meaningful new perspective of the journey toward the Cross.

I have also enjoyed a 40-day journey with Maya Angelou in recent years. I have discovered that there are several theologians whose writings have explored a 40-day journey. These include Julian of Norwich, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Joan Chittister, and Martin Luther, among others.

This year I have a new book: *Wintering: The Power of Rest and Retreat in Difficult Times* by Katherine May. I discovered there is a workbook to use with the book, which will help me get all I can out of using this for the first time.

Fasting and self-denial: There are many ways of fasting and self-denial and none are right or wrong. There are simply multiple options to allow you to find the method you would choose to use. In the past I have chosen to refrain from favorite items such as chocolate, sweets, or diet coke. Some people will fast for 24-hour periods, but because of needing food to take medications, etc. this has never been a viable option for me.

You will also hear me often share that fasting and self-denial are not the only ways to observe Lent. When choosing to fast during Lent, it is important to go beyond denying yourself to create an opportunity to use your fasting to connect to a way of making a difference.

I use the example of a friend of mine who fasted often during Lent, and each time she took the equivalent amount of what the food she normally would have eaten and gave it to a food pantry to allow others to eat through our self-denial.

Next month we will walk through the days of Holy Week and the ways we at St. Paul's will offer to guide each step of our journey to and beyond the Cross.

I pray for each of you to experience a Holy Lent. It is only through a Holy Lent that we can celebrate the most triumphant Easter Morning.

Mother Allison+



Notes from St. Paul's Annual Meeting

Attendance: 27 in-person; 3 on Zoom

Elections

The Vestry:

Retiring members – **Alf Kennedy** and **Rachel Bitler** (who retains responsibility for property)

Continuing members – **Ian Brandau**, **Linda Candlish**, **Karen Hicks**, and **Katherine Staller** (senior warden)

New members – **Valerie Evert** (junior warden) and **Victoria Wilcox** (secretary)

Diocesan Convention

Diocesan convention will be held October 18-19 in State College. **Susan Clark** and **Russ Carnahan**, delegates; **Scott Atherton**, alternate.

A year ago, a discernment committee was formed to study the potential of reunification of the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania and the Diocese of Bethlehem. The committee anticipates it will take an additional year of discernment to determine how reunification would impact both dioceses and if it would result in a mutually beneficial arrangement. **Deacon Jim Jenkins** serves on this committee.

Board of Trustees

Steve Hicks, chair; **Tom Evans**, **Darley Hobbs**, **Rob Dillon**, **Alton Walker** and **Carol Tevis**.

Questions

What is the Sunday attendance, specifically the eight o'clock service? Overall attendance has gone from approximately 40 to 50. Average attendance at the eight o'clock service is 9-10. In recent months, there have been as many as 15-20 at the eight o'clock service.

Where are we with Protestant Campus Ministry? **Craig Bond**, PCM's advisor, recently moved his office back into St. Paul's, but is currently deployed. **Steve Hummel** from Trinity United Church of Christ is filling in as point of contact for the group.

Reports of Clergy and Parish Officers

Reports were submitted by title. The congregation is encouraged to read and respond to the reports. **Mother Allison** is open to discussing questions or concerns.

Senior Warden

JC Owens said he was hoping to be able to sign **Mother Allison's** letter of agreement before the annual meeting, but it was delayed and should be signed within the following week. Discussion included **Mother Allison's** new call from Priest Associate to Priest-in-charge, with the date of



Katherine Staller, the new Senior Warden, and Mother Allison.

formal installation to be announced. **Scott Atherton** noted that St. Paul's is looking forward to her installation, and we hope it can be scheduled sooner rather than later.

Treasurer

Bruce Candlish noted that at the previous annual meeting he had to announce that we would be working with a deficit budget. This time we have a budget with a small surplus. This was Bruce's last report as treasurer.

As of January 21st, there has been no replacement. Bruce noted that he is willing to provide support for whomever accepts the role of treasurer. The new bookkeeping firm has taken over responsibility for bill paying, payroll, and vestry reports. With these changes, along with support from Bruce and the bookkeeper, the next treasurer should have a lighter workload and smaller time commitment than past treasurers have had.

Karen Hicks noted the exemplary quality of Bruce's reports. On behalf of the congregation, Karen expressed gratitude for Bruce's service as treasurer.

Photos by Alton Walker

Letter of Agreement

A new letter of agreement was required for Mother Allison to transition from priest associate to priest-in-charge. Karen Hicks noted the letter follows guidelines established by the diocese. This is a two-year agreement. After two years, if we decide to call Mother Allison and she accepts, she will become the rector.

New business

Strategic planning

Victoria Wilcox gave an overview of the work done by the Strategic Planning Committee. Tasked with doing a needs assessment to gather feedback from the congregation, the committee used the information to develop mission and vision statements, and to establish goals that outline who we are, where we are going, and how we will get there.

The next stage will include choosing one or two things we can do, working with vestry, and establishing committees to work on how to attain our goals. Without losing sight of the importance of growing the church, we can focus on remaining a place of worship while serving the community, using the properties more effectively, and reducing our carbon footprint.

Victoria thanked the congregation for their contributions and noted that it will take the whole parish, working together, to achieve our goals.

Altar Guild

Scott Atherton thanked **Rob** and **Deidre Dillon** for donating battery-operated candles, noting they are not only beautiful, but save the Altar Guild a lot of time and work – no wax cleanup! He also thanked **Sally Sitler** for her years of service to the Altar Guild. He mentioned that when Jean joined the guild there were 25 members; now there are five.

Outreach

Karen Hicks spoke about our outreach efforts and how much we do with the financial and human resources we have. She thanked the congregation for the work that goes into having a

successful outreach program. She also noted that in 2024 six percent of the budget will be designated for outreach.

Mother Allison noted we will be looking for new opportunities within the context of whether it moves us toward our vision.

Mother Allison also reviewed the sources and purposes of discretionary funds.

Email security

Deacon Jim addressed email security, specifically phishing emails that look like they come from Mother Allison, Deacon Jim or Bishop Audrey. Hackers use clergy members' legitimate email addresses to set up an account. Generally, the email will have a sense of urgency and will ask recipients to purchase gift cards and send the access numbers back to the account set up by the hacker. Deacon Jim said neither he nor Mother Allison would ever request money or gift cards.

Other announcements/questions/comments

- Our sign out front has been repaired and is ready to be used for events and messages.
- Please use allison.carnahan01@gmail.com to reach Mother Allison. She will no longer receive messages from priestassociatestpauls@gmail.com.
- Mother Allison's decision to call off church services on January 7th was made for the safety of parishioners.
- St. Paul's received two memorial gifts in 2023: new candles from the Fritz family in memory of **Teeny Fritz**, and new altar linens from the Brandt family in memory of **Ann Brandt**.
- The congregation wholeheartedly welcomed **Mark O'Hearn** back as music director and organist.
- CMEC has invited St. Paul's to join their annual Shrove Tuesday event.
- St. Paul's will offer Stations of the Cross services and veneration during Lent. On Ash Wednesday (February 14th), Deacon

Jim will offer Ashes-to-Go, and St. Paul's and Christ Memorial will hold a combined service. CMEC will also join us for Easter Vigil. Holy Week begins on March 24th, and the schedule of services will be announced.

- St. Paul's and Christ Memorial plan to continue having shared services and fellowship events, and to support and coordinate outreach opportunities.
- **Linda Candlish** reminded the congregation that it's not important why the yoke was broken, only that we move forward. There is goodwill at CMEC for us to move forward together. She also noted that volunteers are needed for the Shaped by Faith committee to work on developing a new grant proposal.
- **Rob Dillon** asked if there are plans to have a nursery school program on Sunday mornings. Mother Allison said starting programs for children at St. Paul's is a work in progress. She outlined some of the guidelines that must be met to have the Sunday School program, including clearances and fingerprinting; having two adults present for each class; and requiring all adult participants to complete the Safeguarding God's Children course.
- Mother Allison welcomes questions or concerns regarding the reports or the notes from the Annual Meeting.

Notes submitted by Elaine Pongratz, Annual Meeting Secretary



Winter Outreach:

Help us keep our 9-year winning streak going!

We are more than halfway through the 10th Panther Packs Challenge to provide **60 actual and virtual (monetary donation) bags of food**. Shopping lists and donation envelopes are on the table in the back of the church and on the “example” table in the foyer.

Each \$10 donation will be equal to a virtual “bag” of kid-friendly food. Checks should be written to St. Paul’s with *Panther Packs* on the memo line. For those who want to donate actual bags of food, there is an example table in the foyer with the items that the Panther Packs program needs the most. The total cost for the 4 bags of food on the example table was \$42.

Food items that will best support the 2024 program include:

- **cold cereal: 8 oz – 12 oz boxes of (larger boxes do not fit in PP bags) or individual servings; hot cereal: individual cups or boxes of individual packets**
- **16 oz. jars of peanut butter**
- **16 oz cans ravioli with meat & Spaghetti O’s with meatballs; macaroni & cheese**
- **soup (canned, dry, or individual servings); ramen noodles,**
- **tuna, fruit cups, pudding cups, granola bars, breakfast bars, microwave popcorn**

So far, St. Paul’s has met or exceeded our goal every year. Let’s see what we can do in 2024 – 60 bags of actual or virtual food!

The challenge will run until February 14th.



Caring for Creation Corner

United Nations Climate Change conferences (or COPs) take place every year and are the world’s only multilateral decision-making forums on climate change with almost complete membership of every country in the world.

People of faith who were involved in the conference have made it clear that it is up to us to follow the science, work away from fossil fuels, and support green energy if we are to impact climate change.

Dr. Lorna Gold, (Chief Executive at FaithInvest) wrote an article “After COP28 – Where Governments have failed, Faiths must now lead”, Dec 15, 2023. Capitalist and fossil fuel interests are delaying our tackling of the root causes of the climate crisis. Her concerns, echoed by many environmental and climate science groups, are that science has proven that such efforts simply deflect the need for urgent action and will never tackle rising temperatures on time.

The official outcome of COP28 did not address the issue of fossil fuels – though for the first time, ‘phase-out of fossil fuels’ is named directly. This is a ‘win’ in terms of the narrative of climate change in the sense that, finally, the cause of climate change is being named. It does not feel like much of a win to me.

As people of faith, we need to come together now in the same spirit as the Faith Pavilion at COP28 in every country around the world and get behind key actions to support accelerated action on tackling the root causes of climate change. It means coming together to address our own emissions and collaborating on efforts to shift to renewable energy.

So let’s begin.

Yours,

Vicki Wilcox

Pancakes are the order of the day!

Once again CMEC and St Paul's will be preparing for Lent with a Shrove (FAT) Tuesday Pancake Dinner on February 13th at 6 p.m. in the CMEC Community Room.

Sign-up sheets will be placed in both churches so we know how many people to expect and what everyone is bringing.

To keep traffic down in the kitchen, we are asking that all hot food be cooked and ready to serve from either crock pots or serving dishes. The only things we will be cooking there are the pancakes and scrambled eggs.

All kinds of food are welcome so bring your favorite "fat" food or not. Anything goes!!

But what is the meaning behind this special day? How and why is it celebrated around the world? It's time to find out with our ten Shrove Tuesday facts!

1) Shrove Tuesday is a Christian festival celebrated in many countries across the globe. It falls on the Tuesday before the beginning of Lent – a period of around six weeks leading up to Easter. During Lent, Christians give up luxuries to remember when Jesus went into the desert for 40 days to fast and pray.

2) The exact date of Shrove Tuesday changes from year to year. But one thing stays the same – it's always **47 days before Easter Sunday**. And yes, you guessed it, it's always on a Tuesday!

3) The name comes from the old word 'shriving', which means to listen to someone's sins and forgive them. In Anglo-Saxon England, Christians would go to church on Shrove Tuesday to confess their sins and clean their soul. In other words, they would be 'shriven'.

4) In the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia and Canada, Shrove Tuesday has another name: Pancake Day! Traditionally during Lent, Christians would give up rich, tasty foods such as butter,

eggs, sugar, and fat (some Christians continue to do so, in fact). Shrove Tuesday was the last chance to eat them – and what better way to do so than with a delicious pancake!

5) Today, people continue to whisk up these yummy treats on Shrove Tuesday – and they add all kinds of tasty toppings, too, such as fruit, honey, chocolate, and ice cream! But check this out; pancakes aren't only for eating during this fab festival – people race with them, too!

6) Pancake races are a super-fun Shrove Tuesday tradition. In this mad-cap activity, people race each other while tossing a pancake in a pan. Today, pancake races are often organized to raise money for charity and help those in need. Awesome!

7) Now, the big question – where did this wacky tradition come from? The story goes that it originated way back in 1445, in the town of Olney in Buckinghamshire, England. A woman was so busy making pancakes that she lost track of time. When she heard the church bells ringing for the Shrove Tuesday mass, she ran as fast as she could to make it and arrived still carrying her pancake in the pan!

8) Pancakes have become such a popular Shrove Tuesday tradition that on this day, a whopping 52 million eggs are used in the UK alone! That's 22 million more than your average day. *Egg-citing* stuff!

9) In other countries, Shrove Tuesday has different names. In Germany, for example, it's called 'Fastnacht' (meaning 'Eve of the Fast') and in Iceland it's called 'Sprengidagur' (meaning 'Bursting Day'). In France and some other parts of the world, the festival is called 'Mardi Gras', from the French phrase meaning 'Fat Tuesday'. And for many people, Mardi Gras means party time...

10) Lots of cities around the world celebrate Mardi Gras with vibrant street parties featuring live bands, colorful parades, and elaborate fancy-dress costumes! Some of the world's largest and most famous Mardi Gras celebrations take place in New Orleans, Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, and Venice in Italy.

CMEC Notes

Search Committee Updates

Three applications have been received for the open priest position at CMEC. The search committee will be conducting interviews throughout the next week. We hope to present the vestry with our top choice at the February meeting on Sunday, February 11th, at 11:45. Please contact the search committee members if you have any questions.

Search committee members: Dave Peterson (chairperson), Joe Koons, Becky Sutherland, Susan Nunan, Kristen Keller, Barbara Rhoades, Deb Williams, and Jenn Patterson.

Vestry Updates

CMEC's next vestry meeting is scheduled for Sunday, February 11th, at 11:45 a.m.

CMEC annual meeting minutes and updated financial report have been distributed to parish members via email.

There will be no changes to the CMEC Vestry for 2024. As noted at the annual meeting, Bishop Scanlon has approved to freeze the CMEC Vestry for 2024 during the search of a new priest.

Ash Wednesday

Combined service at CMEC at 6 p.m.

Diaper Bank

The next diaper bank at CMEC is scheduled for Saturday, February 10th, from 10 a.m. until noon.

THE EPISCOPAL MESSENGER

A newsletter for the parishes of

Christ Memorial Episcopal Church, Danville

And

St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Bloomsburg

Please send articles and other correspondence to

Doug Hippenstiel or Jenn Patterson

Dch17846@gmail.com Patt1011@ptd.net

February Lectionary

2/2 - Presentation of Jesus in the Temple

Malachi 3:1-4
Hebrews 2:14-18
Luke 2:22-40
Psalm 84 or
Psalm 24:7-10

2/4 - Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany

Isaiah 40:21-31
1 Corinthians 9:16-23
Mark 1:29-39
Psalm 147:1-12, 21c

2/11 - Last Sunday after the Epiphany

2 Kings 2:1-12
2 Corinthians 4:3-6
Mark 9:2-9
Psalm 50:1-6

2/14 - Ash Wednesday

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17
Or Isaiah 58:1-12
2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21
Psalm 103

2/18 - First Sunday in Lent

Genesis 9:8-17
1 Peter 3:18-22
Mark 1:9-15
Psalm 25:1-9

2/24 - St. Matthias, Apostle

Acts 1:15-26
Philippians 3:13-21
John 15:1, 6-16
Psalm 15

2/25 - Second Sunday in Lent

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16
Romans 4:13-25
Mark 8:31-38
Psalm 22:22-30

'Noisy' Collection

In February, the Noisy Collection at St. Paul's will go to Columbia-Montour Agency on Aging. If you do not have the opportunity to place your coins in the collection plate during Sunday services at the church, you may send a check and write "CMAA" on the memo line.

OOM Dessert Mission resumes NOW!

As we begin our **FIFTH YEAR** of bringing desserts to our friends at Our Orangeville Manor, please consider signing up to participate in this sweet mission!

Dates include:

February 4 Patty Creasy
Feb. 18 _____
March 3 _____
March 17 _____
March 31 _____
April 14 Jen Miller
April 28 _____
May 12 _____
May 26 _____
June 9 _____
June 23 _____

To sign up, or if you have questions, contact Elaine Pongratz @ mdmep@ptd.net

Year-round UTO Boxes

This year we are trying something new regarding UTO offerings. Instead of waiting until fall and filling UTO boxes for a month, boxes will be available on the usher's table all year long. Filled boxes can be turned in anytime by placing them in the offertory basket. Folks can collect coins year-round by trading full boxes for empty ones. Coins will go into a separate account, then next October a check will be sent to UTO.

February Baptismal Birthdays

James Fritz * Michelle Matzko * Meredith Wilcox * Christopher Wilcox * Jaxon Kyle Brandt * Matthew Evert Haney * Kathy Reimard Hippenstiel

(CMEC parishioners are invited to add their baptismal birthdays by contacting Jenn or Doug.)

Lenten Music Notes

On February 14th the church enters the great solemn season of Lent for a period of 40 days. Simplicity is the focus of Lent with the altar being free of adornments such as candlesticks and flowers as well as crosses veiled during this time.

You will notice some changes musically in the liturgy from the "Alleluias" becoming silent during this time to the Gloria in Excelsis being omitted until the Great Vigil of Easter. You will also notice that the prelude and postlude is omitted during the season of Lent except for the Fourth Sunday of Lent -- "Laetaure Sunday."

The reason we observe these liturgical practices is to better center ourselves on Christ's ultimate sacrifice on the cross and to enter into this quiet time of penance prescribed by the church as we contemplate Christ's fast in the wilderness, his last supper and journey to the cross and finally the culmination of his glorious Resurrection on Easter Day.

May this holy season of Lent be fruitful and fulfilling in bringing us spiritually closer to Christ as we begin our journey with him to the cross.

Mark O'Hearn

Music Director

In Our Prayers

Adelaide * Alex * Anne * Ardella * Barry *
Belinda * Benny * Bishop Curry * Bob * Brian *
Candy * Cathleen * Charlene Hancock * Chris *
C.J. * Christian * Claudia * Connie * Craig * Dale *
Earl * Elaine * Ellen * Emily * Gary * Gerry *
Gini * Gloria * Glory * Harry * Heidi * Jack * Jeff *
Jill * Jim * Joan * Joanie * Joanne * Johanna *
John * Josh * Judy * Julie * Justin * Kathy * Kay *
Kevin * Larry * Laurie * Laverne * Leon *
Leslie * Lynn * Marilyn * Mark * Marsha *
Marshall * Mary * Merika * Michael * Mikey *
Monica * Nadine * Nancy * Pam * Paul *
Richard A. * Richard Orsini * Sadie * Sam *
Sandy * Sharlet * Steve * Susan * Tanny *
Theresa * TJ * Tom

Saint Paul's and Christ Memorial Leadership

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

**The Rev. Allison Carnahan,
*Priest-in-Charge***

Telephone: 512-517-3404
Allison.carnahan01@gmail.com

The Rev. Jim Jenkins, Deacon

Telephone: 541-306-1215
jim-jenkins@comcast.net

Patty Creasy, Church Secretary

Telephone: 570-594-4518
saintpaulsbloom@gmail.com

Officers

Katherine Staller, Senior Warden

kesbb@windstream.net

Valerie Evert, Junior Warden

Valerie17815@gmail.com

Victoria Wilcox, Secretary

Victoriawilcox7@gmail.com

Other Vestry Members

Ian Brandau

ianclub@ptd.net

Linda Candlish

lacandlish@gmail.com

Karen Hicks

Karenhicks.kh@gmail.com

JC Owens

owensjc@hotmail.com

Christ Memorial Episcopal Church

Priest Search Underway

**Cindy Cornelison, Parish
Administrator**

Choir Director

(570) 275-3903

cmecdanville@ptd.net

Officers

Michelle Walczak, Senior Warden

mawalczak3@gmail.com

Ken Altenbach, Junior Warden

kenlmare@yahoo.com

Jenn Patterson, Secretary

Patt1011@ptd.net

Doug Cummings, Treasurer

douglas_lutz@hotmail.com

Other Vestry Members

Joseph Koons

jrkoons@verizon.net

Robin Kessler

rlkessler0902@hotmail.com

Beverly Peterson

bjmp@ptd.net

Erin Ryan

erinmom23boys@gmail.com

Sharon Shutovich

smshutovich@yahoo.com

Deb Williams

dkwilliamsmammie@gmail.com