

Living Waters

December 2022

Hopeful Anticipation

Advent ushers in a new liturgical year as we patiently await the arrival of the Christ-child. It is a season of hopeful anticipation. In the darkness we prepare the way by lighting candles, patiently waiting for the birth of a child. As a parent I cannot help but recall the hopeful anticipation as we awaited the arrival of our boys. We prepared by celebrating with family and friends at baby showers. We put together furniture and set up the nursery. We sorted through the admittedly too many clothes we were given. We were ready... until we weren't. Our boys were all born on their own time (two of them just eight minutes apart!), months earlier than we had anticipated. We didn't get to settle into a nice home nursery, but laid them in plastic bassinets surrounded by doctors, nurses and social workers in a neonatal intensive care unit. We made plans, and is often the case with children, they had other plans. There were moments that felt very lonely and hopeless. Week after week in the NICU was a difficult way to start life together, and yet I know that God was with us each step of the way. Just as God, "Emmanuel," will be with us soon once more. Perhaps we feel well prepared for the season ahead. Perhaps this Christmas is not as highly anticipated because of the stress and struggles of the past year. The good news is that no matter where we are in life, God is with us. Bringing hope, peace, joy and love, perhaps when we need them most.

Christmas Worship

Join us in person or online for worship Sundays at 8 & 10 am as we journey through the Advent season, preparing ourselves for the birth of the Christ child. A full listing of our Christmas worship services can be found on page 5.



**Love as God Loves.
Give as God Gives.**

Dear Siblings in Christ,

The annual stewardship emphasis "Love as God loves. Give as God gives" has come to a close. Once again, the generous hearts of the members of St. Paul have come through! To date, 58 pledges have come in supporting the many ministries here at St. Paul. We are blessed by this response. Thank you for the love of generosity that you share in the name of Christ. If you have not yet been able to submit your commitment, there is still time! You may complete one [ONLINE](#) or place it in the offering basket on a Sunday morning. Extra commitment cards are available at the check-in tables if you have misplaced yours. Thank you and God bless you for your abundant generosity!

Pastor Zak



In this issue...

First Communion	p. 2
Prayer Vigil	p. 3
Youth & Family	p. 4
Dec. Worship	p. 5
ELCA & Wider World	p. 6

Worship Information

In-Person

Sundays

Worship in the sanctuary at 8 & 10 am.

Online/Livestream

Watch the first service live on [YouTube](#), or anytime after that!

Altar Flowers Sign-Up

Sign up now using our [digital sign-up](#)! Two bouquet slots available for each Sunday; each bouquet is \$30.

Poinsettia Sign-Up

Sign up now using our [digital sign-up](#)! Each plant is \$12.

Congregational Life...

First Communion at St. Paul

What joyous fall we had with First Communion celebrations taking place on both Reformation Sunday and All Saints Sunday. Eight students participated in this Faith Milestone and we are excited for all of them!



Pastor Zak and the First Communion families bake communion bread for the worship services.



Wine Women and the Word

Wine Women and the Word will be meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 6th at 7pm at the home of Pat Bolin (50 N. Princeton Ave, Villa Park). We will be studying Matthew 1-3. All are welcome and please contact [Judy Nuehring](#) with any questions.

Book Club Monday December 5th

The St. Paul book club will meet on Monday, December 5th at 7pm in the Café. This month we will discuss a novel by Elizabeth Berg entitled *The Story of Arthur Truluv*. This novel is about three people who become family to one another even though they weren't born into the same family.

Book Club will not meet in January but we will return in February to discuss *The Black Church* by Henry Louis Gates Jr. All are welcome!

Under 105 Club December 1st 1-3pm

Join us December 1st at 1pm in the Cafe for holiday cookies and coffee. Please consider bringing homemade or store bought cookies to share.

A white elephant exchange will take place for those who want to participate. Please contact [Marian Hammerel](#) with any questions.

...and More!

A Word of Thanks from the Prayer Vigil Team

"And this is the boldness we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us." —1 John 5:14

After over two years, the St. Paul Prayer Vigil was held in person at church! We had 30 participants and 11 greeters & helpers—thank you to all who participated. The comments from participants tell the rest of the story:

- *"This centered me at the beginning of my day."*
- *"The candles and the music [in the Café] created a peaceful place for prayer."*
- *"It's so nice to pray in the sanctuary."*
- *"I stayed longer than 20 minutes because it was such a welcoming space."*
- *"I continue to use the prayer book I was given."*
- *"I think about that experience every time I pray."*
- *"So good to have this back in person." "I loved it. I'm so glad it's back in church!"*

We plan to have our next Prayer Vigil in the spring, and we will also offer a virtual option on Holy Saturday. Stay tuned for more information.

Thank you especially to the Prayer Vigil Team: Linda Lange, Sandy Olsen, and Alice Ramsay. We would love to have a couple of new members for our team. We could use creative ideas for setting up the Café and help with planning, set-up, and clean-up. Contact Alice Ramsay if you are interested: 224-360-1481 or alice@stpaulvp.org.

Hands and Feet Outreach

Hands and Feet will be open Sunday, Dec. 4th from 2-4 pm however, we will *NOT* be open on Sunday Jan. 1st. At this time we are collecting in kind donations and shoes. A list of needed items can be found on the church website. Donations can be left in the bins outside the Hands and Feet door on the lower level of the church. Thank you for your continued blessings of this ministry.

ReGenerate December 16 at 7:30pm

Join us on Dec. 16th with the theme of ReGenerate as we connect to the traditions of the season with some wonderful jazzy Christmas songs. Doors open at 7:10pm and the program begins at 7:30pm. More information can be found in the foyer at church.

Jazz Prayer is presented by Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Oak Park, IL

October Numbers

Giving: \$43,693 (including online: \$20,600)

Expenses: \$42,575

YTD Giving vs. Expenses: \$7,214

Other Statistics

Date	Attendance	Viewers
10/2	104	73
10/9	104	57
10/16	141	45
10/23	124	48
10/30	94	82

A Special Note Regarding End of Year Donations

All financial gifts postmarked by Dec. 31st will be counted toward 2022. Online donations need to be made by December 27th to be processed for 2022. Thank you for your ongoing support & generosity.

Beer & Hymns December 16th at 7pm Manny's Ale House

On December 16th we will revisit all the old favorite Christmas hymns. Be ready to call out your favorites, and bring your friends for some warm indoor caroling. We meet in the back room at Manny's Ale House on St. Charles, just east of Villa Ave. Singing starts at 7:00, but come early so you can order dinner, or order while singing. Good for the lungs and good for the soul! Questions - contact [Doreen Fritz](#).

Mitten Tree

We are collecting new hats, mittens, scarves, and gloves this holiday season. We will be hanging donations on a tree in the Cafe. The collection will run until Dec. 18th. Any questions contact [Laura Albert](#).

Youth and Family Ministry

Enchanted Castle Lock-In

Our kids had a great time at Enchanted Castle for a lock-in last month. We had a group of 12 kids from St. Paul in attendance! They were joined by over 200 youth from around the Metro-Chicago Synod! During the night, they enjoyed pizza, arcade games, laser tag, mini-golf, and go-karts at 3 o'clock in the morning! We are thankful for fun youth opportunities!!



Christmas Program and Live Interactive Nativity

December 11th is a fun day for our youth and families at St. Paul! All kids 3 years old through 12th grade have been invited to participate in our yearly Christmas Program! This year's program tells the story of a Bethlehem innkeeper and her son preparing for a large number of guests, including the arrival of one special guest! The program will be December 11th during the 10:00am worship service. Immediately following the Christmas Program and worship service, we will have a special treat for families. Friendly Farms Ltd in DeKalb will be visiting for a few hours for a Live Interactive Nativity Scene! They are bringing several animals from their farm! Kids and families will be able to pet the animals, take pictures with them, and enjoy the holiday season!

Confirmation Retreat

Save the Date! March 3-5, 2023, our confirmation students have the opportunity to attend a weekend retreat at Lutherdale! Included in the weekend will be worship opportunities, camp games and activities, all well diving deep into the life of Martin Luther! Cost is \$125 per person. Please talk to Allison in the office with any questions.



Middle School/High School Holiday Party

Our Middle School and High School students are invited to a Holiday Party on January 8, 2023! Activities include a White Elephant gift exchange (\$10 limit), holiday craft/activity, and so much more! Details to come soon!

Godly Play Storytellers

We have had a fantastic start to our Sunday School year! Kids, families, and volunteers have enjoyed our Godly Play program. We have more stories scheduled for the second part of our program year and would love to have storytellers sign up for a week. Just a reminder, this is a commitment to one week at a time! Storytellers can sign up [HERE](#) for as many or as few as they would like. Please contact Allison in the office if you have any questions or would like more information.

Worship & Prayers



December Worship Schedule

Sunday December 4th

8am & 10am Worship

Sunday December 11th

8am Worship

10am Christmas Program

11am Live Interactive Nativity

Sunday December 18th

8am & 10am Worship

9am Ring Sing

Saturday December 24th Christmas Eve

5pm - Choirs/Special Music

7pm - Choirs/Special Music

11pm - Contemplative

Sunday December 25th Christmas Day

9am Worship

(One Service Only)

Sunday January 1st New Year's Day

9am Lessons & Carols

(One Service Only)

"Regular" 8am & 10am worship services resume Sunday, January 8 with our celebrations of Epiphany and the Baptism of Our Lord. All services are available via livestream.

Prayer List

Names will remain on the prayer list for three weeks, or longer by request. To submit a prayer request please use the online [Prayer Request form](#), email prayers@stpaulvp.org, or contact the church office.

Prayers of Healing and God's Presence

Melinda Brent, Kristy Fash-Alvarez, Margaret Golden, Arlene Jensen, Nan Marcum, Joe Mottlow (nephew of Pauline Ares), Brian Peterson (brother of Donna Windmoeller), Sandy Robershaw, Tommy Shallcross, Nina Thompson (daughter-in-law of Vince & Jacky Fagin), All Caregivers

Prayers for the Bereaved

Family and friends of Stephen Bache (brother of Vivian Quam) and Mary Herbers (sister of Joel Quam)

Community



Elm Tree News

November brought many opportunities to learn about healthy eating, farming/harvesting and voting. The children also enjoyed Thanksgiving activities and talked about the importance of spending time with family. The board and staff wish everyone a blessed Thanksgiving!



Making hand turkeys



Digging in our new outdoor space

The ELCA and the Wider World - Lutherans Start Outside Europe

Franklin Ishida

It began in 1619, 400 years ago, with a group of Danish explorers who got trapped in the Canadian arctic. It wasn't until the 1660s that the first Lutheran congregation was established in New Amsterdam, what is now New York. Meanwhile, the oldest continuous Lutheran congregation in what we now know as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is Frederik Lutheran Church on St. John, US Virgin Islands, which traces its roots to 1666.

We do need to recognize that Lutherans in the Americas established themselves by settlement -- immigrant settlers from Europe bringing their faith with them. So much of Lutheran history in the Americas thus centers around European cultural, ethnic and social history. In more recent years, meanwhile, we see growth among Lutheran immigrants from non-European places of origin, including from Africa and Asia.

When it comes to mission within the Americas, though, the experience has been mission among the native peoples (American Indians and Native Alaskans). Lutherans have not done too much here, with the exception of the Seward Peninsula of Alaska, which is largely Lutheran.

Mission to other countries from the US started about 150 years ago. Missionaries went to countries such as China, India, Japan, and Madagascar for starts. All this is a whole other story. Many of the ELCA's companion churches around the world have origins or connections with American missionaries. But we cannot forget that Lutheran mission in some places outdates much of the establishment of Lutheran churches US. The first Protestant (which happened to be Lutheran) mission to India started in 1706, coming out of the Danish colony in Tranquebar in southeast India. So you could say that Indian Lutherans were among the first non-European Lutherans, and dating back more than 300 years.

The richness of mission surrounds us everywhere, whether by settlement, immigration or mission work.

December 2022

All events subject to change. Items in *italics* are **in-person** events; all other events are virtual.
View the calendar at www.spaulvp.org for more information and Zoom links, or contact the church office.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 1P Under 105	2	3 9A Finance Workshop 930A Chimes Rehearsal 10A Christmas Program Rehearsal
4 8A Worship 9A Sunday School Confirmation High School Hangout Wired Word 10A Worship 2P Hands & Feet	5 10A Prayers & Squares 7P Book Club 7P Logos	6 10A Staff Meeting 6P Youth Commission Mtg 7P Wine, Women & the Word	7 930A Bible Study 530P Wed. Night Dinner 6P Handbells 7P Choir	8	9	10 930A Chimes Rehearsal 10A Christmas Program Rehearsal
11 8A Worship 9A Sunday School Confirmation High School Hangout Wired Word 10A Christmas Program 11A Live Interactive Nativity	12 630P Finance Committee Mtg 7P Logos 730P Executive Committee Mtg	13 10A Staff Meeting 2P Rachel Circle 7P Council Mtg	14 930A Bible Study 530P Wed. Night Dinner 6P Handbells 7P Choir	15 6P Elm Tree Christmas Program	16	17
18 8A Worship 9A Ring Sing 10A Worship	19 11A Beacon Hill Worship 630P Elm Tree Board Meeting 7P Logos	20 Living Waters Deadline	21 6P Handbells 7P Choir	22	23 Timesheets Due	24 Christmas Eve 5P Worship 7P Worship 11P Worship
25 Christmas Day 9A Worship - One service only on Christmas Day	26 Office Closed	27 10A Staff Meeting	28 930A Bible Study 6P Handbells 7P Choir	29	30	31 New Year's Eve



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Loved by God, we grow, care, give, and share in Jesus' name.

St. Paul Leadership

Church Council

President: Marti Seaton
Vice President: Gay Nass
Treasurer: Tom Pfenning
Secretary: Chris Bard
Financial Secretary: Cathy Caron
Caring Commissioners: Laura Albert
Congregation and Community Commissioner: Emy Ishida
Education Commissioner: Rachel Hauser
Property Commissioner: Joel Johnson
Stewardship Commissioner: John Freidheim
Worship, Music, and Arts Commissioner: Cindy Johnson
Youth Commissioners: Cheryl Wolf and Wendy Biggs

Staff

Pastor: Rev. Zachary Wagner
Director of Music: Cynthia Viise
Director of Youth & Family Ministry:
Allison Mikyska
Parish Administrator: Liz Chitester
Administrative & Computer Specialist:
Alice Ramsay
Worship & Technology Assistants:
Fiona Kordyban and Andrew Speidel
Social Media Coordinator: Katie Briseno
Nursery Attendants:
Nina Matthis & Riley Biggs

St. Paul Lutheran Church is a
congregation of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America and a
Reconciling in Christ community.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Stay Connected

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