

2025



Merry Christmas Dear Ones
Merry Christmas Children of God!

Sitting in my office this afternoon after running around all week trying to put details together for worship services, to answer your questions as you each stop by to do the work of the many committees or ministries here at St Paul, I sit here and think about the upcoming Advent and Christmas season. It's easy to get wrapped up in all the details.

And sometimes it can feel like you are all wrapped up in the wrapping paper, tied up in all the string.

Have you noticed that the traffic on the roads seems to be moving faster these days? Have you noticed that people seem to be rushing here, there, and everywhere? When you go out to the store, slow down for a second and just watch. It's kind of crazy. But also notice their faces. Some of the people are clearly happy, enjoying the hustle and bustle. Others, there is something else in their eyes. Is it sadness? A sense of being lost? Is it grief? Is it them just down to the bone tired? Is that you? Is that how your eyes look? Is that how your body feels.

Things aren't necessarily easy for people right now. Certainly, the divisions in our world are taking their toll on all of us. It takes its toll on our relationships, our patience. It takes its toll on our physical health.

And don't get me started on the darkness of the days. Ugh! You with me?

Stick with me. There is hope and a lot of it. For my Dear Ones, a light shines in the darkness. This is a fact. This is the truth. This is our confession. This is what we cling to. A Light shines in the darkness and that light is the gift of Jesus Christ.

The angels filled the sky and sang it to the shepherds. The Savior of the world, Your Savior has come. Jesus Christ is the light, the light that no darkness can overcome. Jesus is the light that walks with you. Sits with you. Laughs and cries with you. Jesus is the light who has and continues to forgive you and claim you and refuses to let you face any day alone.

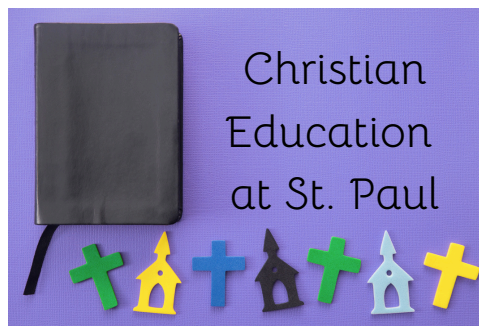
Jesus Christ is the Light and the Hope for the world. for the whole world- that means YOU!

The Light has come! Come and live in that Light!

Blessings to each of you and Merry Christmas!

May the Light of Christ bring you great joy this Holy Season!

Pastor Lisa



Sunday School

Sunday School is in full swing! We have purchased curriculum that will follow our text that is used during Sunday Services to reinforce learning. If you have any questions or would be willing to volunteer to teach please sign up on the bulletin board or contact Morgan Wertz 309-435-1819

Exodus Bible Study Continues

There are just a few weeks left of Exodus. Please check the calendar for the final dates. You are always welcome to jump in on any Bible Study! We would love to have you join us! Pastor is leading a Bible Study on Exodus twice a week, Monday nights at 6:00 PM and Wednesday afternoons at 2:00 PM! We always learn something and we definitely always spend a lot of time laughing! Who knew Bible Study could be so much fun?! Join us!

Confirmation Classes Continue

We will have the month of December off from class and resume on January 11th to study about the sacrament of Holy Baptism. Please continue to pray for the students and their families as they live out their baptismal promises.

LGBTQIA+ Support Group

The second installment of the book study will take place on Saturday December 13th at 6pm. Even If you missed the first meeting if you are interested in being a part of such a group regardless of how you identify or if you are an ally, please contact either AJ Dunn, Kathy Niu or Quincy Johnson for more details.

Supper Club: Lunch edition

Come and join your church family for lunch at Warrior Way Cafe at Woodruff High School on Thursday December 11th. We will meet at the school at 12pm. We won't know the menu until Monday or Tuesday of that week but we will send out an email to those who have signed up as soon as we know the menu. The cost of the 3 course meal is \$8 per person. Please sign up on the bulletin board by Sunday December 7th so we can get our reservation in the books!



Church Staff

- Rev. Lisa Dietrich, Pastor
- Bev Fordham, Administrative Assistant
- Eric Coffey, Custodian
- Kyle Burkholder, Groundskeeper
- Deborah Garmers, Organist
- Michael Helgeson, Celebration and Praise Music Coordinator

Church Council

- Abigail Williams, President
- Michael Helgeson, Vice President
- Linda Lowery, Secretary
- Penny Post-Freeman, Financial Officer
- Karen Rocke, Service Ministries
- Mary Jane Moder, Worship
- Morgan Wertz, Education/Youth
- Brian Sharp, Property



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

Ugly Christmas Sweaters

You are invited on Sunday December 21st to wear your Ugly Sweater to worship! Let's have some fun together as we get closer to Christmas! Let's see how creative and ugly those sweaters can get!!!



Christmas Eve

Please join us for Christmas Eve worship December 24th at 7:00 pm! The service will celebrate Holy Communion and the lighting of candles. Please invite your friends and family to join us to welcome the Christ born to set us free! We would love to have standing room only on Christmas Eve!

Christmas Day

Worship Christmas Day worship will be at 10:00 am and highlight a lessons and carols format. Come and relax after a busy season and simply enjoy the telling of the story and singing your favorite songs. This will be a casual but beautiful service followed by wonderful fellowship! We can't wait to see you in worship!

Parsonage Christmas Open House!

Please join Pastor Lisa, Scott, and Penelope for a Christmas Open House at the Parsonage on Sunday December 14th from 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm. Pastor and Scott will have a TON of Christmas goodies to snack on and the fellowship will be wonderful! Please join us and simply enjoy being with your church friends (and Penelope).

Poinsettias!

You are invited to purchase a poinsettia to beautify the altar area for Christmas! This year the poinsettias cost \$16 and can be purchased in memory or in celebration of someone. Please sign up on the sign up sheet stating clearly who, or what, you are dedicating your poinsettia to. Please give your \$16 to Carol Frietsch who will keep track and place the order for the church. The drop dead deadline for ordering a poinsettia is Sunday December 14th. You may take your poinsettia home following the Christmas Eve worship service. Thank you to all who help make this service extra beautiful!

Worship Assistants

12/7: Hal Fordham
12/14: AJ Dunn
12/21: AJ Dunn
12/28:

Fellowship Treats

12/7: Lisa Snyder
12/14:
12/21:
12/28:

Birthdays and Anniversaries

12/1: Arielle Heerman
12/3: Mary Voigt
12/4: Maelynn Ewing
12/5: Steve Rocke
12/7: Casey Crotz
12/7: Bob DeCroix
12/9: Floyd Rademaker
12/14: Peter Freeman
12/14: Stuart Johnson
12/16: Jude Ney
12/22: Debbie Garmers
12/23: Stuart and Shari Johnson's
Anniversary
12/26: Megan Wertz
12/27: Scott Demanes
12/28: Becky Hedman
12/28: Peter and Penny Post-
Freeman's Anniversary
12/30: Pastor Lisa

Counters

12/7: Kyle Burkholder and Amber
Lowery
12/14: Scott Lee and Julia Coffman
12/21: Karen Rocke and Jodi Sharp
12/28: Gerry Bloom and Hal
Fordham

Council Highlights

There was a discussion on the aging sound system. A designated donation from the Shirley Taute family was received and because Shirley watched the St. Paul Sunday service on-line, the family felt that she would have wanted others to benefit from a better sound experience.

Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the congregation will be January 25th following worship with a potluck lunch. At this meeting we will approve the budget for 2026. You, your opinion, and your vote matters at this meeting so please attend as together we continue to listen to God's voice for St. Paul and the ministry that God is calling us to together!

Annual Reports

It's the time of the year to start working on your year end reports. Please submit all written reports by email to the church office no later than Wednesday January 14th. Thank you!

Address Change

Please update your directories with this new address for:

Mary Ehlen-Thomas
c/o Heartis
8201 N. Rt. 91 MC11
Peoria, IL 61615

Article deadlines

Please submit articles for the weekly bulletin no later than 10am Thursday mornings.

Articles for the January newsletter need to be submitted no later than 10am on December 22nd.

Notification

Please if you are in the building for any reason, or any length of time contact the office so we know who is in the building.

Thank you!

Help us out!

Sunday mornings can become very chaotic! We ask that if you have anything that we need to remember please write it down for us and put it in the box outside of our offices. We don't want things to slip past us because we don't remember what was said. Please also remember that Sunday is a day off for the staff and they are here to worship with you. Please try and respect their day off. Thank you!

We Pray For:

Shirley Barber, Rob Hackett,
Floyd Rademaker, Andrea
Williams, Susie Ney, Jeff
Williams, Kendra Tallman, Abby
Mundwiller, Shannon Perales,
Jim Chamberlain, Terri
Montgomery, Joe Ferrie, Nina
Marquart, Susan
VanMoorlehem, Roger Conrad,
Boyd Conrad, Willie Miller and
Rachel Jenks.

Our Shut-ins:

Floyd Rademaker, Nina
Marquart, Tom Schreiner and
Sam Kahl

Prayer Chain Contacts:

Cindy Lee 309.635.9691
Eileen Cunningham
309.685.0720



As this year comes to a close I want to thank you for allowing me to work as the office administrator. I absolutely love being able to share the gifts that God has given me with all of you! My family and I are so blessed to be a part of this amazing congregation and consider you all family. We pray that this holiday season brings you many blessings and that next year brings more joy for this congregation to share with our neighbors and all who are to come to St. Paul!

All my love to you all!

Bev

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

December 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 10:00am –11:00am Worship 11:15am –12:00pm Sunday School	1 5:30pm Church Council 6:00pm –8:00pm Scouts (Bischoff)	2 10:30am –12:00pm TOPS 5:30pm Mini Dinner	3 5:00pm –9:00pm Gems of the Prairie Christmas Dinner	4	5	6 Bischoff Room Reserved 9:00am –12:00pm Clothing Closet Open
7 10:00am –11:00am Worship 11:15am –12:00pm Sunday School	8 6:00pm Bible Study on Exodus 6:00pm –8:00pm Scouts (Bischoff)	9 10:30am –12:00pm TOPS	10 2:00pm Bible Study on Exodus	11 12:00pm Warrior Cafe lunch outing 5:30pm Finance Committee	12	13 6:00pm LGBTQIA+ Book Study
14 10:00am –11:00am Worship 11:15am –12:00pm Sunday School 2:00pm –5:00pm Christmas Open House at the Parsonage	15 6:00pm Bible Study on Exodus 6:00pm –8:00pm Scouts (Bischoff)	16 10:30am –12:00pm TOPS	17 10:00am –2:00pm Faithful Creations 2:00pm Bible Study on Exodus	18	19	20
21 10:00am –11:00am Worship-- Wear Your "Ugly" Sweaters! 11:15am –12:00pm Sunday School	22 6:00pm –8:00pm Scouts (Bischoff)	23 10:30am –12:00pm TOPS	24 7:00pm Christmas Eve Worship	25 10:00am Christmas Day Worship	26 Scouts Overnight Lockin	27 Scouts Overnight Lockin
28 10:00am –11:00am Worship 11:15am –12:00pm Sunday School	29 6:00pm –8:00pm Scouts (Bischoff)	30 10:30am –12:00pm TOPS	31	1	2	3 9:00am –12:00pm Clothing Closet Open