

St. Paul Lutheran

December 2023 NEWSLETTER



From the Pastor:

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I always wondered when in my life I'd outgrow presents at Christmas time. I'll be honest, I still love receiving a gift, even if it's only something small. If asked though, I'll rarely say if there's something I want. I'll say instead that time with family and friends is enough for me. Perhaps you don't care for presents anymore either. We all know how difficult it can be for families to gather around the holidays, especially if family is scattered in different cities or states.

Now, we all know that Christmas isn't about the presents under the tree. But our secular world loves turning holidays into materialistic events. How many presents you get. How big or expensive they are. To our world, there is so much anxiety about having everything be perfect. The perfect food, the perfect gifts, the perfectly clean house for family to come over for the gifts and food. It's exhausting. And even as much as we know this shouldn't be, we fall into it too sometimes.

This Advent and Christmas season, we'll be following our theme, "Saved through childbearing" (1 Timothy 2:15). We normally think of children as the burden of Christmas, having to buy toys and presents for them. Yet, we'll hear instead how God used the women of Scripture to bring about the baby to be placed into a manger. From Eve to Mary, countless generations of women gave birth to those who our Lord would use in his redemption of mankind.

Christmas may not be about *presents*. Rather, it's about *presence*! Why have Christians given gifts at Christmas? Is it not because God gave a gift to us? It was the presence, the birth of his only Son. Just as Luke records, "**For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord,**" **Luke 2:11**. The presence of God with his people was really the biggest and most expensive gift God could give. For it was Jesus as God incarnate who breaks through the barriers of our sin and by his sinless life, offers the redemption of Eve, and all women and all men.

This Christmas, we remember how the birth of a small child is really the greatest gift we could have. In his birth, God blesses us with the one who is our Savior. For so this child shall go from a wooden manger to a wooden cross. By a star is his birth made known and by a star (the sun) is his resurrection shown. So let us give thanks to God for the presence of Jesus and the birth by the virgin Mary. For so it was in such a lowly birth, God blessed us with the greatest present of all! One that we can now share with the whole world... the peace of Immanuel, God with us!

Pastor Sorenson



Happy Birthday!

Inge Carlson– 12/2
Bryanna Rakow–12/4
Addison Vong– 12/7
Joyce Jensen– 12/12
Morgan McGill– 12/17
Roosevelt Dahn– 12/19
Doreen Speirs– 12/21

Altar Flowers



December 3–

Inge Carlson

December 10- (None)

December 17- (None)

December 24– Christmas Flowers

December 31- (None)

St Paul Online:

Visit our website: www.stpaulmadison.org



Facebook– @StPaulMadisonLCMS

YouTube– St Paul Lutheran Church
(services and sermons online)



Note: You do NOT have to have an account in order to view these pages.

Contact us

St Paul Office– 608-244-8077
office@stpaulmadison.org
Pastor Sorenson (Cell) 317-690-5204
pastorsorenson@stpaulmadison.org

Serving in December

Altar Guild

Chris Krueger & Linda Williamson

Tellers

Kay Daubenspeck & Chris Krueger
John & Linda Williamson

Ushers

December 3

Rick Van Dusen, Ray Hellmer, Leo Lakpa

December 10-

Jerry Meise, Jamie Meise, Dan Dierks

December 17-

Richard Beal, Randy Buss, Tom Niemczyk

December 24-

Rick Van Dusen, Ray Hellmer, Leo Lakpa

December 31-

Jerry Meise, Jamie Meise, Dan Dierks

DATES TO REMEMBER

December 3– Tellers Meeting

December 24– Christmas Eve Service @ 6pm

December 25– Christmas Day Service @ 9:30am

December 25-30– Office Closed (Christmas Break)

Poinsettia

Don't forget! If you ordered a poinsettia for Christmas, you may pick up your flowers following service on Christmas Day.



PORTALS OF PRAYER:

To help us determine how many quarterly Portals of Prayer booklets to order in 2024, there is a sign-up sheet on the north wall of the Narthex. The deadline to sign up is Sunday December 31, 2023. If you want to make a donation to cover the cost of your Portals of Prayer, a regular print Portals of Prayer costs \$9.00 for one year and a large print Portals of Prayer costs \$18.00 for one year.

Offering Envelopes

Envelopes for 2024 will be available in the Narthex throughout December. They are arranged in alphabetical order by last name. Help us save on postage by picking up your box.

Advent Dinners

St Paul will be hosting Advent dinners for our partnership churches this December. If you wish to help by cooking or bringing food for this, there is a sign up sheet on the bulletin board in the Narthex. Meal plans are:



December 6– Casserole dinner

December 13– Sandwich bar

December 20– Chili

Meals are every week starting at 5pm (service at 6pm). Come and join us for wonderful food and fellowship!

MARY, EXHAUSTED,
HAVING JUST
GOTTEN JESUS
TO SLEEP, IS
APPROACHED BY
A YOUNG MAN
WHO THINKS TO
HIMSELF : WHAT
THIS GIRL NEEDS
IS A DRUM SOLO

St Paul Financial Update

GENERAL FUND INCOME AND EXPENSES

November 2023 Actual Income	\$15,110.00
November 2023 Actual Expenses	\$15,092.59
November 2023 Net	\$17.41

DEBT

Unpaid Balance on Mortgage Loan (11/30/2023)	\$164,552.35
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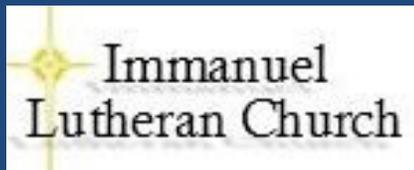
Take Note

Please send any items you'd like mentioned in our monthly newsletter to the office at office@stpaulmadison.org, or please call the office at 608-244-8077.

ALL NEWSLETTER ITEMS MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE LAST MONDAY OF EACH MONTH.

Thank you for your help!

LCMS Madison Church Partnership



Joint Bible Study

Immanuel has long held a Wednesday morning Bible study. In light of our budding partnership with St Paul, Monona, and Our Savior Deaf, we would like to invite members from our sister churches to join us.

We start at 9:00am with treats and chit-chat. The Bible study proper starts around 9:30am and goes for an hour. We typically work through a book of the Bible, with occasional detours to discuss the theological implications of current events or questions from the group. The group is currently working through the book of Job.

The group meets at Immanuel (1021 Spaight St, Madison, WI 53703) downstairs in the lakeview room. Enter the church from Immanuel's side door (look for a mailbox) head down the stairs and hang a right.

Upcoming Dates:

December 6 (6pm)- Advent Services begin
(St. Paul)

December 10 (1:30pm)- Partnership Council
(St. Paul)

December 14 (7pm)- Carols and Candlelight
(Immanuel)

December 25 (9:30am)- Christmas Day service
(St. Paul)

Joint Advent

Come and join us at St. Paul for our Midweek Advent services hosted **each week at 6pm**. This Advent, we will prepare to greet the coming King! Each week, we will have the opportunity to hear from a different pastor from our partnership churches as they share the word with us. Our theme this year is "Saved through childbearing".

**December 6– Pastor Sorenson
Eve– The First Mother**

**December 13– Pastor Nowak
Rahab– Mother by Grace**

**December 20– Pastor Erdman
Ruth– A Mother Redeemed!**



Come early and enjoy a fresh made meal and some wonderful fellowship. Dinner will be served beforehand at 5pm, downstairs in the Fellowship hall. If you are interested in bringing a dish, side, or treat to share, a sign up sheet will be provided.

We look forward to having you join us!

Carols and Candlelight at Immanuel on Dec 14 @7pm: Immanuel is holding our traditional Carols and Candlelight service again this year, with a little twist. This year, we are partnering with three other churches to hold the service together, St Paul Lutheran, Monona Lutheran, and Our Savior Deaf Lutheran. There will be a joint choir, combining voices from all these churches and others in the community. (If you are interested in joining this choir, please email Mark Bloedow at musicdirectorme@b@gmail.com) The Ringing Badgers Bell Choir, under the direction of Mark Bloedow, will also be joining us. We hope you will join us too for a night filled with carols, bells, candle light, and the reading of the Christmas story.