



The Epistle December 2023



*"I the Lord do not change....." Malachi 3:6
 "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." 1 Peter 1:3*

Dear friends and members of St. Paul's

We are entering into the Advent/Christmas season which brings with it many revered traditions. Some of these include familiar Christmas songs, various ways to obtain and decorate the Christmas tree, family gatherings, Christmas programs, worship services, and the like. We tend to become nostalgic for the "way things were" this time of year, and whether this nostalgia is based on what really happened, is quite beside the point.

It is assuring to know that in our changing world, our God does not change. The same God and his promises which led his people of old, continues to lead us today. While our God does not change, we do change. 2 Corinthians 5:7 says "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation the old has gone, the new has come." When Christ encounters us with his forgiving Word we are changed from sinners to saints, enemies to friends, hopeless to hopeful, and the list goes on.

What does all this mean? When the pleasantness or sadness of nostalgia envelopes you this Christmas/Advent season, remember the changeless account of Christ's birth is ever new for you.

Have a blessed Advent/Christmas,
 Pastor Krenz

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Pastor Stephen Krenz 618-363-0121	

December Sermon Series

December 3rd & 4th
 "Kingdom Gifts & Then Some"
 Matthew 6:25-33
 ✝
 December 10th & 11th
 "Purposeful Waiting"
 2 Peter 3:8-14
 ✝
 December 17th & 18th
 "Peace Came to Earth"
 Isaiah 9:6-7
 Children's Christmas Program
 ✝
 Christmas Eve, Sunday 12/24
 "God's ~~Major~~ Manger Sign"
 Luke 27
 ✝
 Christmas Day, Monday 12/25
 "God Has Spoken,
 and His Name is Jesus"
 Hebrews 1:1
 ✝
 New Year's Eve
 "The Blessing of Time"
 Psalm 90:12

ADVENT SERMON SERIES

December 6, 13, and 20

DOMINUS

God's Power Over All Things Evil



4 pm & 6:30 pm

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Mission Statement:

Proclaim Christ,

Teach Christ's Word and Reflect Christ's Love to All!

St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 227 Goodhaven Street,
 Columbia, IL 62236 618.281.4600 stpauls-lcms.org
 facebook.com/stpaulscolumbiail



Member Spotlight

Alice Jestus and family

As a child, I went to many schools and churches as we moved around to find work for my father. My husband, Charles Eugene Jestus, and I moved to Cahokia with our family of five. We joined Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church in 1959; I was baptized then with three of our children. I went to information classes at Mt. Calvary and was confirmed. My husband was already a Lutheran as he was baptized and confirmed while attending a Lutheran school in St. Louis. We had a total of five children, all baptized and confirmed Lutherans. We moved to Dupon in 1987, and he passed away 2008. I worked in the health field for a period of time.



I belonged to LWML at Mt. Calvary, serving on table and decorating committee and greeting card committee. When Mt. Calvary closed in 2013, I looked for a church close by. My daughter (with disabilities) already was confirmed and a member of St. Paul's, so I transferred to St. Paul's in 2014. It took some time to get acquainted and adjusted, but I feel at home here now with my church family. I have known Pastor Melchior, Pastor Theiss, and now our great Pastor Krenz. I now have joined Ladies League/LWML here at St. Paul's and am on the funeral lunch committee.

My favorite Bible verse is John 3:16,
"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

My favorite hymn is "Amazing Grace."



Dec 3rd Sunday, 8 am & 10:30 am

Dec 4th Monday, 6:30 pm

Dec 6th Wednesday, Advent 4 pm & 6:30 pm

Dec 10th Sunday, 8 am & 10:30 am

Dec 11th Monday, 6:30 pm

Dec 13th Wednesday, Advent 4 pm & 6:30 pm

Dec 17th Sunday, 8 am & 10:30 am

(Children's Christmas Program at 10:30 Service)

Dec 18th Monday, 6:30 pm

Dec 20th Wednesday, Advent 4 pm & 6:30 pm

Dec 24th Christmas Eve, 3 pm & 6:30 pm

Dec 25th Christmas Day, Monday 9 am

Dec 31st Sunday, 8 am & 10:30 am

BREAKFAST WITH

Mary + Joseph

REGISTER YOUR FAMILY FOR BREAKFAST WITH MARY & JOSEPH



- All are welcome, but activities are targeted for students in PreK - 4th grade
- All children must be accompanied by an adult
- Come when you can & leave when you must. It will take about an hour for your family to explore everything in Bethlehem.

Come and enjoy a *free* continental style breakfast, crafts, music, and fellowship while celebrating the most important Christmas gift of all: our Savior, Jesus.

Meet Mary, Joseph, the Angel Gabriel, and others who will lead you through the account of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem.

Saturday, December 2 9 -11 am
St. Paul's Lutheran Church
227 N. Goodhaven St., Columbia

Pre-Register by 11/27

stpauls-lcms.org or pick up registration form in Narthex

Contact the Church Office with any questions!
(618)281-4600 | secretary@stpauls-lcms.org



Walking with Alison Update: (From Allison)

Thank you so much for coming to my walk or showing support by donating. Everyone's support and generosity was amazing. We would especially like to thank Pastor and everyone who helped

put the event together. Thanks again! Praying the Lord blesses your giving heart in abundant measure. Luke 6:38

December 11th *(Early due to Holidays)* = **Newsletter Deadline**

Usually the 3rd Monday of most months.

Please send articles, photos, etc. to secretary@stpauls-lcms.org

-Thank you for your help!



LWML Mission Statement

*As Lutheran Women in Mission,
we joyfully proclaim Christ,
support missions,
and equip women to honor God
by serving others.*



We were once more greeted by beautiful fall decorations in the Fellowship Hall. Thanks to our hostesses (Barb & Wanda) for the desserts, drinks, and table décor. Nancy R. led with a devotion entitled "Autumn Aroma" and a prayer. After lunch, Karen Mueller gave a presentation about her experiences at the Milwaukee convention. A business meeting followed which included 2024 hostess selection, monthly topics, and a welcome to our new member, Cindy Troup. We, also, reelected Nancy R. as Vice President and Kathy S. as Treasurer. In addition to our meeting, our daytime group met with our Mailbox Members on Nov. 5th and spent time in sharing a devotion, food, fun, and service projects for our shut-ins (cards) and posters for Pastor's visits. We all enjoyed the fellowship of the evening!

We will meet again on December 7th at 11:30 in the Fellowship Hall. This get-together will be our annual Christmas party. This year, we will be having a pot-luck lunch with members bringing side dishes to accompany roast beef. Pastor Krenz will lead with a devotion. A skit, some games, a gift exchange and a very minimal business meeting are also being planned. All participating in the exchange should bring a \$5.00 - \$10.00 gift which will serve as the selection of our Prayer Friend. Sandy R., Alice J., and Stefanie will be our hostesses bringing decorations and preparing drinks.

LWML News (For our members and Mailbox Members)

Thank you for all who donated to the ingathering for Unity Lutheran School sponsored by the Metro South Zone. 2) The Metro South Zone held a quarterly planning meeting here at St. Paul's on Nov. 9th. Thanks to Pastor Krenz for the inspirational devotion and to Alice J., Stefanie N. and Marilyn S. for desserts and set-up help.

***You are welcome to join us at our meetings, events, service projects,
or just to visit anytime. For more information,
contact Wanda at 618-281-4691.***





OOPS – Let's Welcome our C and E Christians

They are often called **C and E Christians**—Those brothers and sisters in Christ who mostly come to church to worship their Savior only at Christmas or Easter or on special occasions like weddings, funerals, baptisms, etc. Long time pastors not only know who the **C and E Christians** in their flock and communities are, but look forward to greeting them joyfully and by name whenever they see them. Perhaps you sort of fit into this not-in-church very often category. If so, we welcome you to worship our Savior with us during the Advent and Christmas season. If you don't, I'm sure you know someone who seems to be a **C and E Christian**. Please be on the lookout for that seldom seen brother or sister in Christ and invite him and her to worship when you run into them out there and be sure to greet them warmly when you see them in church during the upcoming holidays. Yep! Just another **OOPS** (**O**utreach **O**ppportunity **S**uggestion) from your Christian Board of Outreach.

Outreach Opportunity Suggestion

2024 Intention Forms

Intention giving forms were mailed out. Please consider filling this out and placing in the Stewardship box in the entryway. We will be collecting these forms through December 17th. Extra forms can be found in the entryway.

2024 Contribution Envelopes

Envelopes are in the entryway and may be picked up at your convenience.



Almond Bark

- 12 oz Almond Bark or 6 oz Almond Bark and 6 oz Chocolate Chips
- 2/3 cup Chopped Almonds or any chopped nuts you prefer

Instructions

In a microwave-safe bowl, place the almond bark or the almond bark and chocolate chips. Microwave on high one minute, then stir. Microwave another 30 seconds, then stir. Continue to microwave for 30 and stirring until the chocolate is melted and smooth.

Add the almond pieces in and stir well. Spread the chocolate candy onto a waxed paper lined cookie sheet. Let cool at room temperature or you can refrigerate it to speed up the cooling process. Once the candy is set, break up into serving sized pieces.



Easy Almond Bark
Only 2 Ingredients Needed
FrugalFamilyHome.com



FOOD
pantry

Current Pantry Needs:

Cereal, Holiday Baking Supplies

December Dates:

12/16 12/13 12/20

1st & 3rd Wednesdays - 1:30-3pm

2nd Wednesday - 4-6 pm

FOOD PANTRY

Call 281-4600 for assistance on all other days.



Adult Education

Tuesday Men's Bible Study

Meet w/ us at 7:15 am in the Narthex.

All men welcome. We are studying the Old Testament, Epistle and Gospel readings for the following Sunday.

Wednesday Women's Bible Study

Wednesdays with Nancy, 10 am
studying the Gospel of Luke

WOMEN'S
BIBLE STUDY

Wednesdays with Nancy, 10 am

studying the Gospel of Luke. Ladies will meet on Wednesday, December 6th and then take a break until Jan. 10, 2024.

Fridays, once a month

It's Some of the PSALMS in 2023

Please contact Pastor Sievers (314-882-2097) or pastorsievers@yahoo.com.

We continue to study some of the Psalms in our first Friday of the month -Not Just for Couples Bible Study Group. *We will next meet Friday, December 8th at 6:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall. Before class preparation is strongly encouraged. Adults of any age are welcome.

Sunday mornings from 9:15-10:15am

The Book of Hebrews:

Join us on Sunday mornings starting November 26th and continuing throughout December as we walk through this book which shows us both the superiority of Jesus, and his invitation to faithfulness.

Next Adult Information Class:

If you or someone you know is interested in joining the congregation and/or learning more about what Lutherans teach, join us for an informational meeting on Sunday, January 7th at 4:30 pm.

WOMEN's Ministry

Generally meets on the
third Monday of each month.
We will not meet in December.
Please join us in
January, (1/15)
at 6:30 in the Fellowship Hall.



2023 Youth Event Calendar

December 2nd

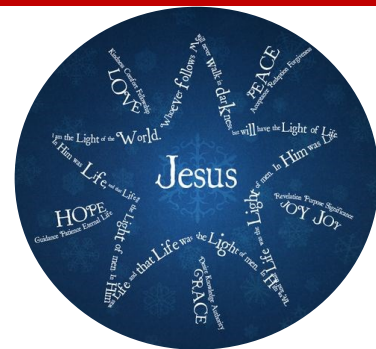
Breakfast with Mary
and Joseph

December 2nd

Bright Night Christmas
Parade/Columbia

December 10, 3-6PM

Youth Group Christmas Caroling



January 2nd

Ice Skating, Middle, High School &
College, 1 pm

See the full calendar at
<https://stpauls-lcms.org/youth.html>

Columbia

Saturday,
Dec 2, 5 pm.

Our float for the
**Lighted Christmas
Parade** is almost
complete, all that
is missing is YOU!
Join us on our float
to sing with Jeanine
on keyboard,
or walk along
and hand out flyers.
All singing abilities
are welcome.
Sign up sheet is
in the Narthex.



Historic Main Street Columbia
Saturday, December 2 at 5:00PM

Bundle up and help us welcome this
special holiday season!
Vote for your favorite float
5pm-7pm
Via QR code on the website and Facebook



Join us after the parade
for more holiday cheer at
Turner Hall's
Christmas Social



**Line-up is Saturday Dec 2 at 4:00pm in the
Bohm-Schuhkraft City Park for the 5pm parade**
ending at Turner Hall.

Comforts of Love Quilters-Tuesdays

Quilters meet Tuesdays from 9 am to
10:30 am. Please join us! We have
"sew" much fun!
**Thank you for all your
support!**





November 2023 Preschool News

Throughout December, we will be celebrating the Christmas season with a variety of special activities. And, in addition to our regular Bible lessons, we will also be learning about different Christmas symbols & their meanings, with our main focus being the true meaning of Christmas--the birth of Jesus. We will conclude the month with a Christmas Celebration for our students and their families.

In November, we will have our annual Thanksgiving Feast for our students and their families. This is another opportunity for family involvement at the preschool. The children always look forward to this special day and they enjoy helping prepare the "feast" for our guests. As we celebrate Thanksgiving, we strive to help the children in various ways to recognize all that we have to be thankful for and to realize how very blessed we are.

We would like to give a special thanks to the following:

- ♥ Thrivent members for the donations of their Choice Dollars to the Preschool.
- ♥ Members of St. Paul's Lutheran Church and the Board of Education for their continued support of our Preschool.
- ♥ Our secretary, Dianne as well as The Women's Ministry for passing out candy to the preschoolers on Halloween.
- ♥ And, to our preschool families who support us through donations, time, and volunteering. We thank you all!

The Preschool will be closed December 20-January 3 for Christmas Break. **Wishing you Peace and Joy this Christmas Season; and Blessings for a Healthy and Happy 2024!** Shelly Augustin, Director/Teacher



December Jesus Lessons

Jesus is Born

+
Angels Tell
the Shepherds

+
Shepherds
Worship Jesus

For unto us,
a Child is born....
Isaiah 9:6





Giving a faithful and compassionate witness to those who are cohabitating.

Whether you read last month's newsletter article on this topic or not, I'm sure you are aware that "cohabitation" prior to marriage has now become the norm in our society and among many in our churches. How are Christians, who believe the Biblical message that this is not what God intends, to respond to those they love who are presently cohabitating?

We can take two extremes; one is to imply that this lifestyle is an unpardonable sin, or we can endorse cohabitation as the new way things are done both in the culture and in the church. Over my years in ministry my response to cohabitating couples has gone off track in both directions and so the below suggestions are not made as one who has perfectly handled these situations. None-the-less here are a few thoughts.

Ironically, couples who cohabit often feel there are no other options. They feel the pressure from their boyfriend/ girlfriend, society, friends, and even families, to live in such an arrangement. Popular reasons include saving money, seeing this as a "test" for marriage, and believing it is just easier to be together in one apartment than two. Yet, the God who has created this couple and sent Jesus to die for them is not going to let their economic life fall apart by following his way of doing things. Yes, one may have less, but learning to live with less is part of learning how to live with money. In addition, couples are more apt to stay together when before God and others they say, "till death do us part", versus making every week a test run as to whether he or she is the one.

Secular studies confirm that cohabitating couples are less likely to stay together than couples who have not cohabitated prior to marriage. One option cohabitating couples often do not consider is getting married in a small ceremony at church or at the court, and then later extending that ceremony by reaffirming those vows in a wedding celebration at church followed by a reception. I have had couples take this approach several times and have yet to hear regrets for either ceremony.

Much more could be said, but this article is already quite long. Many blessings as you continue to serve the faithful and compassionate Savior.



Floyd & Judith Crowder Holiday Concert-St. Louis Metro Singers Saturday, December 2, 2023 7 pm St. Paul UCC, 127 St. Paul Street, Columbia, IL

The St. Louis Metro Singers will once again lead us into the Christmas season with a performance of Christmas choral favorites. The holiday concert is also the evening we pay tribute to the memory of the Eppinger Foundation's founding

president, Floyd Crowder. Make plans to join us for the "Sounds of the Season" in the beautifully decorated St. Paul UCC sanctuary.



Singers Company will perform their "Home For the Holidays" show at the **Turner Hall Social following the Bright Nights Christmas Parade in Columbia, December 2nd.**

Singers Company provides a non-competitive opportunity for elementary-age girls to perform, a fun way to inspire confidence, make friends and share joy through music and dance. Under the direction of Jody Matzenbacher, the Waterloo location will be performing for the public. Singers

Company has 2 locations, Waterloo and Columbia. Registration will open in mid-December for our spring session.

Join the **Valmeyer Community Chorus** as they celebrate the holidays with
**AN EVENING IN DECEMBER on Sunday,
December 10, 2023 at 4:00 p.m.**

at St John United Church of Christ in Valmeyer.

The chorus will sing favorites old and new. We hope you will leave humming a tune and in the holiday spirit!

There is no admission charge, but please bring a canned good to share with a local charity.



Boar's Head Festival

Thursday, November 30 - 7:30pm

Friday, December 1 - 7:30pm

Saturday, December 2 - 7:30pm

Sunday, December 3 - 2:30pm & 6:00pm

FREE tickets available
beginning
Wednesday, November 1

**Peace Lutheran Church,
737 Barracksview Road, St. Louis
314-892-5610 www.peaceboarshead.org
Free will offering will be accepted at each service.**



BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

December 2023

SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

Glenn Woodcock Joel Greeting Larry Murray Luci Washburn	3	Jamie Moestein Leroy Kisro	4	♥ Don & Corla Greer Melissa Roessler	5	Bert Fulk Jordan Holten	6	Gianni Glasco	7	♥ Jacob & Allison Ramsey	8	Marilee Schueler	2
♥ Michele & Douglas Nelson Stephanie Holten	10	Dylan Ray	11	Carole Hancock Gale Toolen ♥ Jack & Carol Wayland John Wallace Ruth Nelson Sue Housewright	12	Samantha Mueller	13	Bohdon Luberda	14	Alex Blum Allison Ramsey	15	Bill Luther Jr Sandy Roessler	9
Danielle Arras Derek Niehaus Erwin Hofstetter Jana Eytchison	17	Brianna Elms Dan Elbrecht Robert Rauh	18	Judy Ostendorf ♥ Tony & Cindy Troup	19	Dean Schorr Denise Nowak ♥ Joshua & Samantha Mueller	20	Reid Glaenzer	21	Gregory Woolley Hezekiah Douglas Kyle Kremmel Sarah Zavadil	22	Aaron Essert Martin Mueller	16
Erin Glaenzer Sherry Smith	24		25	Joshua Thompson	26	♥ Doug & Donna Tolbird	27	Beckett Grider Oliver Kremmel	28		29	Anna Earl Ruth Camp	23
Jonathan Duvall Molly Dietz	31											Cayden Kritz Debbie Caldwell	30





Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3 8 am Divine Service (Sanctuary) 9:15 – 10 am -Adult Bible Class in Fellowship Hall -Youth Bible Study - Youth Rm -Sunday School -SS Wing 10:30 am Divine Service 4 pm Brownie Scouts Mtg 4 pm Jr. Confirmation	4 Count (Team 2) Divine Service 6:30 pm	5 Men's Bible St. 7:15 am 9 am Quilters 7 pm Education Board	6 10 am Women's Bible St. Food Pantry 1:30—3 pm 4 pm Advent Service 5 pm Handbell Choir 6:30 pm Advent Service	7 Ladies League 11:30 am	8 Pastor Sievers Evening Bible Class Psalms 6:30 pm	9
10 8 am Divine Service (Sanctuary) 9:15 – 10 am -Adult Bible Class in Fellowship Hall -Youth Bible Study - Youth Rm -Sunday School -SS Wing 10:30 am Divine Service 12-5 pm Schickedanz Family Fellowship Hall Rental 3-6 pm Youth Group Caroling 4 pm Jr Confirmation	11 Count (Team 3) Divine Service 6:30 pm <div>Newsletter Articles Due</div>	12 Men's Bible St. 7:15 am 9 am Quilters 5:30 pm Trustees 7 pm Elders Christmas Meal at El Paso	13 Food Pantry 4-6 pm 4 pm Advent Service 5 pm Handbell Choir 6:30 pm Advent Service	14 9 am Newsletter Folders	15 Worship @ Bria Nursing Home 2 pm	16
17 8 am Divine Service (Sanctuary) 9:15 – 10 am -Adult Bible Class in Fellowship Hall -Youth Bible Study - Youth Rm -Sunday School -SS Wing 10:30 am Divine Service Children's Christmas Program 4 pm Jr Confirmation	18 Count (Team 1) Divine Service 6:30 pm	19 Men's Bible St. 7:15 am	20 7:30 am Rotary Business Food Pantry 1:30—3 pm 4 pm Advent Service 5:15 pm Handbell Choir 6:30 pm Advent Service	21	22 10 am Worship at The Grande	23
24 Christmas Eve 3 pm Worship Service (Sanctuary) 6 pm Worship Service	25 Christmas Day 9 am Divine Service <div>Day to the world</div>	26 Count (Team 2)	27	28	29	30
31 8 am Divine Service (Sanctuary) 9:15 – 10 am -Adult Bible Class in Fellowship Hall -Youth Bible Study - Youth Rm -Sunday School -SS Wing 10:30 am Divine Service	1/January '24	Count (Team 3)				



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

227 N. Goodhaven Drive
Columbia, IL 62236

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Columbia, Illinois

Permit No. 15

The Epistle

December.2023



Worship with Us

Advent Services
Wednesdays,
12/6, 12/13 & 12/20
4 pm & 6:30 pm

Sundays
@ 8 & 10:30 am
Mondays - 6:30 pm



Christmas Eve, Sunday, 12/24 3 pm & 6 pm

Christmas Day, Monday, 12/25 9 am

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
227 Goodhaven Street, Columbia, IL 62236

618.281.4600 stpauls-lcms.org
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