



**St. Paul's Lutheran Church**

**227 N. Goodhaven Drive  
Columbia, IL 62236**

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

**Nonprofit Organization  
Bulk Mailing  
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Columbia, Illinois  
Permit No. 15**

**The Epistle  
January 2026**

**Sundays  
8 am and 10:30 am  
Mondays 6:30 pm**

**Worship with Us**



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

**618.281.4600 [stpauls-lcms.org](http://stpauls-lcms.org)  
[facebook.com/stpaulscolumbiail](https://facebook.com/stpaulscolumbiail)**

# JANUARY

2026

THE EPISTLE

JANUARY 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>4 8 am Divine Service (Sanctuary)</p> <p>9:15 am -Adult Bible Class in F. Hall SS Children &amp; Youth in SS Wing</p> <p>10:30 am Divine Service (Sanctuary)</p>	<p>5 Count (Team 2)</p> <p>5:15 pm Adult Choir</p> <p>6:30 pm Divine Service</p>	<p>6 7:15 am Men's Bible St. 9 am Quilters</p> <p>5:30 pm B of Youth</p> <p>6:30 pm B of Education</p> <p>7 pm Epiphany Service Freeburg</p>	<p>7 Food Pantry 1:30—3 pm 4 &amp; 6 pm Jr. Confirmation</p> <p>6:30 pm Handbell Choir</p>	<p>1 Church Office Closed</p> <p>8 Ladies League 11:30 am 1:30 pm Stewardship Mtg</p> <p>6:30 pm DCE Call mtg</p>	<p>2 2 pm Bria Bible Study</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>11 8 am Divine Service (Sanctuary)</p> <p>9:15 am -Adult Bible Class in F. Hall SS Children &amp; Youth in SS Wing</p> <p>10:30 am Divine Service (Sanctuary)</p>	<p>12 Count (Team 3)</p> <p>5:15 pm Adult Choir</p> <p>6:30 pm Divine Service</p>	<p>13 7:15 am Men's Bible St. 9 am Pastor Circuit Mtg</p> <p>In Sugar Loaf</p> <p>9 am Quilters</p> <p>5:30 pm Restoration</p> <p>Home Ministries Mtg</p> <p>5:30 pm Trustees Mtg</p> <p>6:30 pm Elders Mtg</p>	<p>14 10 am Women's Bible Study</p> <p>Food Pantry 4—5:30 pm</p> <p>4 &amp; 6 pm Jr. Confirmation</p> <p>6:30 pm Handbell Choir</p>	<p>15 Noon Columbia Clergy Mtg</p>	<p>16 2 pm Bria Nursing Home Worship</p> <p>3:30 pm Garden Place Worship</p>	<p>17 Lay Leader Conf. Collinsville</p>
<p>18 8 am Divine Service (Sanctuary)</p> <p>9:15 am -Adult Bible Class in F. Hall SS Children &amp; Youth in SS Wing</p> <p>10:30 am Divine Service (Sanctuary)</p>	<p>19 Count (Team 1)</p> <p>5:15 pm Adult Choir</p> <p>6:30 pm Divine Service</p> <p>Newsletter Articles Due For February newsletter</p>	<p>20 7:15 am Men's Bible St. 9 am Quilters</p> <p>6:30 pm Church Council</p>	<p>21 10 am Women's Bible Study</p> <p>Food Pantry 1:30—3 pm</p> <p>4 &amp; 6 pm Jr. Confirmation</p> <p>6:30 pm Handbell Choir</p>	<p>22 9 am Newsletter Folders</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24 Rev. Stefanie Installation at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Renault, IL</p>
<p>25 Pre-School Sunday</p> <p>8 am Divine Service (Sanctuary)</p> <p>9:15 am -Adult Bible Class in F. Hall SS Children &amp; Youth in SS Wing</p> <p>10:30 am Divine Service (Sanctuary)</p> <p>3 pm Hymn Choir Festival in Troy</p>	<p>26 Count (Team 2)</p> <p>5:15 pm Adult Choir</p> <p>6:30 pm Divine Service</p>	<p>27 7:15 am Men's Bible St. 9 am Quilters</p> <p>6:30 pm Congregational Voters Mtg</p>	<p>28 10 am Women's Bible Study</p> <p>4 &amp; 6 pm Jr. Confirmation</p> <p>6:30 pm Handbell Choir</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4 Jason Rahn Jeanine Consolino Micah Essert	5	6	7	1 Jared Dinkelman	2 David Jestus Evan Guebert Henry Herbeck Steven Blosser	3 Hadley Grider
11 Bethany Niehaus Ralph Mathews	12 Christine Link Corla Greer Joe Wilson Mark Nolte	13	14 Lindsay Newton	15 Tripp Ford Zane Ebersohl	16 James Colyer Mel & Agnes Stuckmeyer ♥	10 Dave & Julie Greatting ♥ Jessica Kritz Ronald Tomlinson 17 Nolan Mathews
18 Samantha Nelson	19 Timothy Mathews	20 Antonio Mancarella Carla Brelji Jessica McCann	21 Blaine Reichert Brenda Henckler Daniel Heise Evy Colyer	22 Cindy Murray	23 John Hertz Ryan Chandler Skylar Toolen	24 Michael Beatty Noah Gross
25 Jack Wayland Lynn McAuliffe	26 Carol Womack Gail Zavadil Jacob & Lori Camp ♥ Pam Haberl	27 Alan Raney Donald Gruber	28	29 Allie Sackman Helen Nowak Jason Kirk John & Jean Kirk ♥	30 Owen Dietz Razzi Mancarella	31 Dean & Barbara Lungwitz ♥ Gabrielle Nowak



**KFUO Radio**

Did you know that there is a Lutheran Christian Radio Station where you can daily grow in God's Word? You can stream it online or

find it at AM850. Below is their daily program guide  
Schedule and Program Guide - KFUE Radio



**KFUE Radio.** Christ for you. Anytime. Anywhere.

KFUE Radio is the listener-supported broadcast ministry of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Check [kfue.org](http://kfue.org) for up-to-date programs and schedules.

**Broadcast Schedule****Monday – Friday (Central Time)**

7:00 a.m. Morning Prayer  
7:15 a.m. Oratio  
8:00 a.m. Sharper Iron  
9:00 a.m. The Coffee Hour  
9:30 a.m. Sacred Music  
10:00 a.m. Daily Chapel  
LCMS International Center  
10:30 a.m. Sacred Music  
11:00 a.m. Thy Strong Word  
12:00 p.m. Sacred Music  
3:00 p.m. Issues, Etc.  
5:00 p.m. Evening Prayer  
5:30 p.m. Sacred Music

**KFUE**  
**Radio**

Christ for you.  
Anytime. Anywhere.

**Listen, follow, like & share!**

KFUE Radio app

[KFUE.org](http://KFUE.org)

Podcast apps

Smart Speakers

AM 850 St. Louis  
FM 92.7, 104.5, 105.3

Follow us on social media:  
[@KFUERadio](https://www.facebook.com/KFUERadio) [f](https://www.instagram.com/KFUERadio) [X](https://www.twitter.com/KFUERadio) [@](https://www.youtube.com/KFUERadio)

**Sunday (Central Time)**

7:00 a.m. Morning Prayer  
7:30 a.m. Worship Anew  
8:00 a.m. Worship Service  
9:30 a.m. St. Paul's Bible Study  
10:30 a.m. Worship Service  
12:00 p.m. Liberty Action Alert from LCRL  
12:30 p.m. The Lutheran Hour®  
1:00 p.m. Worship Anew  
1:30 p.m. Sacred Music  
4:00 p.m. Worship Service  
5:00 p.m. The Lutheran Hour®  
5:30 p.m. Sacred Music

**DCE Call Process:**

On January 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm the call committee will meet to clarify the job description and to find possible candidates for the Director of Christian Education position. After assembling a list of names of those who might be interested in serving here at St. Paul's, the committee will contact and interview a number of individuals. The call committee will then present a number of candidates (the number TBD) to the congregation, and at a specially scheduled Voter's meeting the congregation will extend a call to one of the candidates. Those on the call committee include Scott Peery, Becky Stevens, Patrick Grandt, Carleigh Ottwell, and Mitch Essert.

**Our Mission Statement:**

**To Provide Parenting Resources & Christ-Centered Spiritual Care in a Residential Setting, to Mothers Whose Children are Currently in Foster Care, Empowering Them to Rebuild & Reunite Their Families.**

**GIVING TREE**

Thank you to everyone who supported our Giving Tree in December. Full results will be provided in the February newsletter. Remember, It's never too late to give any time of the year!

**2026 FINANCIAL GOAL**

- will be to raise \$88,837.50. We are hoping for:
- ☆ 30 new donors at \$30 per month.
- ☆ 20 key donors (\$1,000 annually)

**UPCOMING FUNDRAISERS**

We are planning three trivia nights in 2026. They will be held in March, June & September. Hope to see you there!

**UPCOMING 2026 PROGRAM LAUNCHES**

- ☆ Programming Committee
- ☆ Property Acquisition Committee

Together,  
we can empower mothers  
to rebuild and reunite  
their families!

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO GET INVOLVED?**

There is so much good work to be done! Will you consider joining the Eve's Restoration Ministries' Committee of St. Paul's? The committee meets every other month for one hour. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 13, 2026, from 5:30 to 6:30 pm at church. Please reach out to Amanda Douglas at 314-221-6700 for more information.

**Adult Bible Education****Fridays, Once a Month: 2026****EYES on Isaiah**

Our **Not-for-Couples-Only Bible Class** led by Pastor Sievers will focus on the OT book of Isaiah in 2026, meeting monthly on a convenient Friday. Learn now the Holy Spirit used Isaiah not only to predict with amazing detail our Savior's birth, death, and resurrection, but also to warn and comfort God's people. First class is February 13 at 6:30 p.m. For more info or to order your \$12 study guide, call or text Pastor Sievers (314-882-2097).

**Sunday Morning Adult Bible Class:**

**9:25 am to 10:15**

Do join us on Sunday mornings at 9:15am as we continue our verse by verse look at the Gospel of Luke. We meet in the fellowship hall, and new people are always welcome. Thank you to Roger and Kathy Stechmesser continue to make sure that doughnuts, coffee, and juice are available for this class.

**Tuesday Men's Bible Study**

Meet w/ us at 7:15 am in the Narthex. All men welcome. We have been looking at the Weekly Scriptures in the Worship Service.

**Ladies Bible Study w/ Nancy**

10 to 11 am Wednesdays  
- SS room at end of hall

We will take a break until the second Wednesday of January when we will begin a study on some of the women of the Bible. Call Nancy Radentz or email her for more information. 618-340-2995 [donan9@sbcglobal.net](mailto:donan9@sbcglobal.net)

**Life with God:** The next "Life with God" (New member) class will start on Sunday, February 22<sup>nd</sup> at 4pm.

Please let Pastor Krenz know if you know of someone who might be interested in this 10 week class.

If that time does not work for any of the participants, individuals sessions can be scheduled.





## Preschool News January 2026

January is a time of fresh beginnings and familiar routines in our preschool classroom. As we return to routine after Christmas break, our children will explore winter-themed lessons with learning that encourages curiosity, creativity, and wonder through many hands-on activities while continuing to grow in faith and friendship.

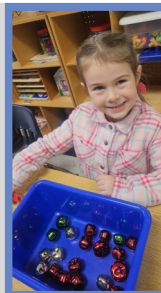
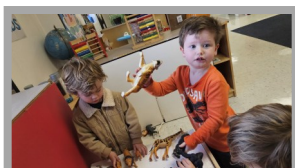
During the last week of January, we celebrate Lutheran Schools Week, a meaningful time filled with joyful traditions and classroom fun. Throughout the week, we will enjoy our annual Grandparents Day which includes special songs, activities, and a delicious breakfast, along with other classroom traditions that create lasting memories for our students and families. As part of the celebration, our preschoolers have been invited to sing during the worship service on Sunday, January 25, with a luncheon to follow. We look forward to joining together in worship and fellowship with the church family.

*"The Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore." Psalm 121:8*

*Blessings, Shelly Augustin, Preschool Director*

### Pre-School Sunday

On Sunday, January 25<sup>th</sup> our congregation will be having a special emphasis on our pre-school. On this day the Pre-school students have been invited to sing, and the board of education is tentatively planning a luncheon for the church and families after the service. Details on that are forthcoming.



## JANUARY/FEBRUARY ELDERS SCHEDULE

		Sunday 8 am	Sunday 10:30 am	Monday 6:30 pm
January	4 5	David Greatting	Levi Ottwell	Bob Thoma
January	11 12	Mark Eischer	Charlie Consolino	Glenn Grebing
January	18 19	Scott Moeslein	Toby Search	Scott Peery
January	25 26	Scott Moeslein	Toby Search	Scott Peery
February	1 2	David Greatting	Levi Ottwell	Scott Peery
February	8 9	Mark Eischer	Charlie Consolino	Glenn Grebing
February	15 16	Scott Moeslein	Levi Ottwell	Bob Thoma
Feb 18	Ash Wed	11 am Charlie Consolino & 6 pm David Greatting		
February	22 23	David Greatting	Levi Ottwell	Bob Thoma
Feb 25	Midweek Wed	11 am Toby Search & 6 pm Mark Eischer		

### Comforts of Love Quilters-Tuesdays



Quilters meet Tuesdays from 9 am -10:30 am  
Please join us! We have "sew" much fun!  
Thank you for all your support! Questions?  
contact Marianne May or Marilyn Snider.

Everyone is invited to a **hymn festival** commemorating the liturgical Festival of the Conversion of St. Paul on January 25.

Four SID churches named 'St. Paul' will join together for this hymn festival that afternoon:

**St. Paul's Columbia, St. Paul Hamel, St. Paul's Troy, and St. Paul Wood River.**

**The Hymn Festival will be**

**Jan. 25, 2026 at 3:00 PM**

**at St. Paul's Troy, 112 N. Border St., Troy, IL.**

Hymn commentaries will be provided by pastors of the participating churches.

The organist will be Joseph Meador from St. Paul, Wood River and MELHS.

The choir conductor will be Karen Shimkus from St. Paul, Troy and St. Paul, Columbia.

The accompanist will be

Kantor Janet Muth from St. Paul, Hamel.

Singers and instrumentalists from all 4 churches and MELHS will participate.

In the spirit of St. Paul, a mission offering will be collected for the Seminario Concordia El Reformador in the Dominican Republic (a mission partner of the SID).







## CHILDREN'S Sunday School

**Sunday School Schedule**  
SS hour is 9:15 to 10:15 am.

### BREAKFAST WITH Mary + Joseph

The angel Gabriel visited Mary & Joseph and 74 students, parents and grandparents for our annual Mary and Joseph Breakfast. About 15 congregation members helped with the event which was a big success again.



## youth SUNDAY SCHOOL

**Youth 8th -12th grade**  
Sundays: 9:15—10:15 am  
In the Loft upstairs



## January upcoming EVENTS

YOUTH BOARD/PLANNING MTG  
5:30 PM

6TH

TEENS ENCOUNTER CHRIST  
TEC WEEKEND RETREAT! TEENS ENCOUNTER CHRIST. FAITH  
EXPLOSION OPPORTUNITY!  
[HTTPS://WWW.SHOWMETEC.COM/HOME](https://www.SHOWMETEC.COM/HOME) REGISTER ASAP! AGES  
16-20. (15 Y/O CAN PARTICIPATE WITH APPROVAL).

17-19

DODGE BALL WITH WATERLOO YOUTH  
GROUP

25TH



Find more details at  
these places or call/text  
Becky at 618-550-3552



## Lay Leadership Training Workshops

Saturday, January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026 Good Shepherd Lutheran Church  
1300 Beltline Rd. Collinsville, IL 62234

Saturday, February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2026 Trinity Lutheran Church  
201 S. Pleasant Ave. Centralia, IL 62801

We are encouraging all District congregations to send their lay leaders to gain skills and expertise through a variety of workshops. These workshops will cover areas that assist youth leaders, school boards, Sunday school teachers/superintendents, trustees, treasurers, evangelism committee members, and congregational presidents in carrying out their assigned duties.

Cost is \$20 per person and includes lunch. Please select which breakout you wish to attend during registration.

Registration fees can be paid online during registration. Or participants can bring in a check on the day of the event.

Make check out to "Southern Illinois District"  
Memo: "Lay Leadership Event"

Checks can be sent to:  
Southern Illinois District, 2408 Lebanon Ave.  
Belleville, IL 62221





### OOPS – Take Our OOPSes to Heart

For several years now, your Board of Christian Outreach has provided you with an **OOPS (Outreach Opportunity Suggestion)** in each newsletter. We do this to give the Holy Spirit another little opportunity to stir you up in your daily Christian living. We don't know how many of you actually read them, but if you are reading this one you do, don't you? Because you do, we encourage you to take each of them to heart. Try them out like you would a new pair of shoes. Whenever one of them fits and looks good on you, wear it and add it to your faith sharing wardrobe. That's our first but not our last 2026 OPPS to you from the bottom of our Jesus filled heart. Happy New Year OOPSing!

**That's this month's OOPS  
from your Board of Christian Outreach.**

*Please consider an increase  
in your giving.*

*This year our contributions are  
already less than our spending.  
Next year we will need even more  
contributions to support  
the new DCE position!*

## 31 Holidays To Celebrate In January

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 1/1  | Polar Bear Plunge Day and New Year's Day |
| 1/2  | Random Acts of Kindness Day              |
| 1/3  | Fruitcake Toss Day                       |
| 1/4  | National Spaghetti Day                   |
| 1/5  | National Bird Day                        |
| 1/6  | Cuddle Up Day                            |
| 1/7  | National Bobblehead Day                  |
| 1/8  | National Argyle Day                      |
| 1/9  | National Bagel Day                       |
| 1/10 | Houseplant Appreciation Day              |
| 1/11 | Step in a Puddle and Splash a Friend Day |
| 1/12 | National Pharmacist Day                  |
| 1/13 | Make Your Dreams Come True Day           |
| 1/14 | Dress Up Your Pet Day                    |
| 1/15 | Hat Day and Martin Luther King Jr. Day   |
| 1/16 | Appreciate a Dragon Day                  |
| 1/17 | New Year's Resolution Ditch Day          |
| 1/18 | Thesaurus Day                            |
| 1/19 | National Popcorn                         |
| 1/20 | National Cheese Lover's Day              |
| 1/21 | Squirrel Appreciation Day                |
| 1/22 | Hot Sauce Day                            |
| 1/23 | National Handwriting Day                 |
| 1/24 | Say Something Nice/Compliment Day        |
| 1/25 | Opposite Day                             |
| 1/26 | Peanut Brittle Day                       |
| 1/27 | Chocolate Cake Day                       |
| 1/28 | National Kazoo Day                       |
| 1/29 | National Puzzle Day                      |
| 1/30 | National Croissant Day                   |
| 1/31 | Inspire Your Heart with Art Day          |



**Current Pantry Needs:**  
**Granola Bars**  
**Coffee**

**MONTHLY: 1st & 3rd Wednesdays: 1:30 -3 pm 2nd Wednesday: 4-5:30 pm**  
**Call 281-4600 for assistance on all other days.**

**January Wednesdays: Jan. 7, 14, & 21**  
**1st & 3rd Wed - 1:30-3pm 2nd Wed - 4-5:30 pm**



**THANKING GOD FOR FOOD PANTRY  
DONATIONS FROM THE BOY SCOUT DRIVE  
AND FOR MANY VOLUNTEERS THAT CAME  
TO HELP SORT AND STORE!**





## LADIES LEAGUE/ LWML

Our December meeting was held at Mr. BBQ'S restaurant in their adjoining event room. Vice President Nancy Radentz opened with a devotion entitled "Joy of Christmas-Luke 2:7" that states Mary gave birth to her firstborn son and "wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." This verse describes the humble and unconventional setting of the birth of our newborn King. We had the common table prayer. While waiting for our food we had a short business meeting.

Kathy Stechmesser, Treasurer and Nancy Radentz, Vice President were thanked for their many years of service to the organization. Those members who helped decorate the church for Christmas were also thanked. The nativity sets are a wonderful addition to the Christmas décor. We played one Christmas game before we enjoyed a delicious buffet meal of fried chicken, roast beef, carrots and potatoes, mashed potatoes, corn, and rolls. Thanks to Mary Clyde our hostess of the month for her yummy desserts.

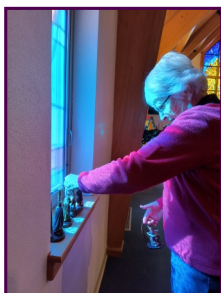
We learned about the legend of the holly wreath and "The Hidden Meaning of the 12 Days of Christmas" song. We sang happy birthday to Sandy Roessler, Susan Housewright, and Judy Ostendorf. We played the Right/

Left game for our gift exchange/ new 2026 prayer friend. Marilyn Snider will have the list. Since the temp in the room never got above 57 degrees we decided to end early, and Nancy Radentz had a closing prayer.

Our next meeting is January 8, (first Thursday would be the 1<sup>st</sup>, we voted to move to the 8<sup>th</sup> for Jan). Our hostesses for the next meeting will be Marilyn Snider and Jane Stumpf. "May God's grace shelter you and His wisdom guide you, so that every day of this new year is a step closer to him."

**ALL ladies in the church are invited to our monthly meetings.**

**Monthly mtgs are on the first Thursday of the month, at 11:30am in the fellowship hall. Our January meeting will take place on January 8 instead of the 1<sup>st</sup>. If you have questions please contact Jane E Stumpf at 314-852-8776.**



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



**Bright Night  
Parade**



*Member Spotlight***Joshua Gillespie****Both Joshua & Austin are first year students at Concordia Seminary in St Louis.**

I'm Josh. I grew up in the church and have lived in seven different states. I'm 20 years old, I love the Minnesota Vikings, and my favorite food is pizza. I speak one language. Before coming to the seminary, I worked as an Activities Assistant with dementia patients.

I like working out, playing sports, or writing songs.

What led you to Concordia Seminary?

Google Maps, haha—but more seriously, I love teaching and counseling people, and there's nothing more beautiful or significant in this world to me than God's Word.

What is your favorite Bible verse or story about Jesus?

Honestly, I don't really have one specific favorite—partly because there are too many to choose from, and because I love reading the Bible as one whole story. But if I had to choose, probably Psalm 23, Psalm 51, Psalm 22, or Psalm 59. I really love the Psalms.

**Austin Kudray**

I'm from the Metro Detroit area, a town called Macomb. I lived in Wisconsin for a little bit and did a semester in Japan, but apart from that

have always been within an hour of where I was born. I lived a pretty normal childhood, playing every sport imaginable and always trying to spend time with friends... and doing a little homework now and again (Not much has changed I suppose)

Outside of school and church, I used to work out a lot but have unfortunately been re-injuring myself since the summer, so that's settled down quite a bit. I love having long conversations and getting to know people, trying new foods, and genuinely doing most anything with anyone. I dabble now and again with the Japanese language and will occasionally play a game or two on my phone, but seminary life keeps me pretty busy.

In terms of my family, I have only one older brother back in Michigan and my parents live with my grandmother in North Carolina. I've also started dating a deaconess student over at the seminary as of a few months back, so she keeps me occupied as well. You may see her every now and then when she's able to join me for different events at St. Paul's, and occasional Monday night services.

My story to seminary is quite a long one. There was a period of about a decade where I felt called to do something within the church and outside of corporate America (about the entirety of my time at Ford); and having a lot of family, friends, and even strangers at times tell me I should peruse the ministry. It got to a point last year where through this long period of waiting, deliberating and prayer, I decided to pull the trigger, have faith in God, and take this next step in my life. God willing I'll be able to be a pastor someday that can bring Christ to people, the same way it was done to me.

My favorite Scripture or story about Jesus... that's a bit tough. I would probably say John 1:29: "The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" This proclamation from John the Baptist resonates with everyone, in every aspect and in every tongue. We all need a savior, and Christ is He who fulfills that promise. God be praised that He takes away our sin too!

**Official Acts of the Church****Baptism:**

**Si Lewis Thompson**  
(11/23/25)

**Confirmation:**

**Sean O'Guin** (11/27/25)

**Bright Night Parade****Monday evenings at St. Paul's...****5:15 pm Adult Choir \*****6:30 pm Divine Service**

\* See more info  
about the Hymns  
Festival at Troy, IL  
on January 25th on page 6.

**Wednesday evenings at St. Paul's:****4 & 6 pm Jr. Confirmation****& 6:30 pm Handbell Choir****Deadline for Submissions**

(articles, photos, calendar updates)  
**for February 2026 Newsletter: 1/19**



# The 2026 JANUARY Epistle

## A Very Sad Day in Illinois

Dear friends and Members of St. Paul's,

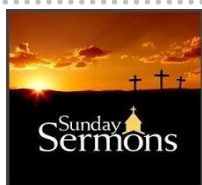
On Dec. 12, Gov. JB Pritzker signed SB 1950 into law, allowing terminally ill adults who are Illinois residents to end their lives through self-administered lethal drugs prescribed by a physician. Illinois became the eleventh state in the union to allow physicians assisted suicide. While it may sound humane to hasten the death of those who suffer at the end of life, it is in fact more compassionate to care, be present, and do everything outside of death to alleviate the suffering of those who have been given a terminal prognosis. Oswald Byer, a Christian writer, summed up our world's view on such issues and our Christian response to that view with these words. *"We live in a world where the weak are often pushed aside and the most fragile among us, the unborn and the aged, are seen as legitimate targets for extermination — the act of killing them even identified as mercy. How different from the Holy Scriptures where mercy, a characteristic of the Triune God Himself, is instead about the donation of life and the doing of that which guards and defends this life without reference to how the quality of that existence might otherwise be evaluated. God shows His mercy to the weak and so the psalmist is bold to pray, "Do not cast me off in the time of old age; forsake me not when my strength is spent" (Ps. 71:9).*

What are some of the additional problems with the recent law signed in Illinois? It changes the relationship between doctor and patient from supporting life to taking life (The Hypocritic Oath). People will now have the added "legal" pressure to end their lives if they feel it is a burden to others. It normalizes taking one's life for some categories of people which is why many disability groups are very concerned. Now that this practice is legalized, it will inevitably be expanded beyond its original intentions. In Canada, at first death had to be 'reasonably foreseeable', this was abandoned in 2021. In Colombia at first the patient had to be 'in the terminal phase', this also was abandoned in 2021. In Oregon assisted suicide is only for terminal illness, but in 2021 this was deemed to include anorexia. Also in Oregon, the residency requirement was abandoned in 2022.

Our merciful Lord is the giver of all life, and he forbids the taking of life in the 5<sup>th</sup> commandment. As believers, we have been given new life in Christ, and that life includes our bodies' now being a temple of the Holy Spirit. The apostle Paul writes *"<sup>19</sup>Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, <sup>20</sup>for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body."* 1 Corinthians 1:19-20. Pray for our state, our nation, and for those who are questioning and/or despising God's gift of life.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Krenz

**EPIPHANY SERVICE- CHRIST OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH IN FREEBURG INVITES YOU TO AN EPIPHANY SERVICE IN FREEBURG ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 6<sup>TH</sup> AT 7PM.**



### January Sermon Schedule: 8 am & 10:30 am & Monday 6:30 pm

January 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup>	"Gifts overflowing, the blessings of being in Christ"	Ephesians 1:3-14
January 11 <sup>th</sup> & 12 <sup>th</sup>	"The blessed gift of dying and Rising with Christ"	Romans 6:1-11
January 18 <sup>th</sup> & 19 <sup>th</sup>	"The blessed call to bear witness to Jesus"	John 1:29-42a
January 25 <sup>th</sup> & 26 <sup>th</sup>	"The blessed folly and power of the cross"	1 Corinthians

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St. Paul's Lutheran Church Mission Statement:  
*Proclaim Christ,  
Teach Christ's Word & Reflect Christ's Love to All!*

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