



St. Paul News

December 2025

St. Paul Lutheran Church

*The Lutheran Church -
Missouri Synod*

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OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of
St. Paul Lutheran Church
is to promote the
worship of the Triune God
as revealed in Holy Scriptures,
by teaching the Gospel of
Jesus Christ and administering
the Sacraments, in order to
equip people for Christian
life and service.

Pastor's Message

"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." — John 1:14

December often feels like a tug-of-war. One part of us aches for peace and stillness—the soft glow of Advent candles, the hush of winter evenings, the deep sigh that comes with singing Advent hymns. We long for quiet hearts and unhurried moments.

But another part of us is dragged in every possible direction. Lists multiply. Calendars fill. School programs, work deadlines, winter storms, and family expectations all converge at the same time. Even the good things—the joy of giving, the beauty of worship, the anticipation of Christmas Eve—can come with a whisper of worry: "What if I forget something? Am I falling behind? Am I ready for any of this?"

Into this swirl of the hustle and bustle, St. John speaks a word older than creation and stronger than our chaos: "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us."

St. John's sentence reaches all the way back to Israel's wilderness. The Greek verb for "dwelt" means "pitched His tent," "tabernacled," or "set up His dwelling." Just as the LORD placed His tent in the center of Israel's camp so that sinners would know He was near—not distant, not aloof—so now the eternal Son of God steps directly into the center of our world. He doesn't wait for peace and order. He doesn't wait for humanity to clean up its act. He brings His presence right into the noise, the exhaustion, the sin, and the unfinished business of real life.

This is the wonder that Advent invites us to ponder: The God who filled the tabernacle with glory now fills human flesh with His presence. He "moves into the neighborhood." He puts on our skin, carries our weakness, shares our tears, and shoulders our burdens.

And that is the Gospel of Christmas: God comes all the way to us. Not halfway. Not almost. Not "close enough." All the way. A stable. A manger. A weary mother. A worried carpenter. A world stumbling in darkness.

This is where Christ chooses to begin His saving work—right in the thick of human need. Christmas is not humanity climbing to God; Christmas is God stooping down, bending low, entering in, and refusing to let sin or sorrow have the last word.

So if this December finds you anxious, distracted, grieving, or stretched thin—if your strength is small and your list is long—hear this comfort: Christ is not far from you. Christ has come with His grace and mercy.

For the Child in the manger is also the Man of the cross. The One wrapped in swaddling cloths will later be wrapped in burial cloths—and then will rise from the dead, so that nothing can separate you from the Father's love. Romans 5:8 says, "God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

Council Notes

The monthly Church Council meeting for December is on the 9th at 7 pm.

The Quarterly Voters' Meeting will meet Sunday, December 14th at 9:30 am. An item on the agenda will be the 2026 Congregational Budget. All confirmed members who are 18 years of age and older are encouraged to this meeting and to share in the decision making of the congregation.



Bake Sale

The LWML bake sale will be December 7th at 10 am and also following the service. If you would like to donate an item or two we ask that you have your items to church by 9:45 am. We also ask that you mark a price on the items. You can contact Sue Erickson if you have a request for any special ingredients.

Christmas Potluck



December 7th at 12 pm

Portals of Prayer for January - March
are available in the narthex.

Christmas Schedule

No
Midweek Advent Services

Wednesday, December 24th
Christmas Eve Service - 5 pm

No
Christmas Day Service

LWML News

Mites can do mitey things! The monthly "Noisy Offerings are always held the third Sunday. Thanks to all of you who find pocket change again and again to fill our cans! That offering along with the mite box for November was \$16.30. These offerings will go toward LWML missions.

As this year comes to a close, the LWML would like to thank everyone who has supported us over the past year. Our Ash Wednesday supper which was a Chili and Soup meal held the Sunday before instead, Summertime Pie Social, selling greeting cards and the upcoming Bake Sale were our fund raisers this past year. The following are some of the organizations that we donate to at the end of the year: Shoe Box postage, American Bible Society, LCMS Global Missions, Avera GF Care Center, YMC Santa's Sleigh, Concordia Food Bank at Fort Wayne and St. Louis, Lutheran Island Camp, Eagles Nest, Hope Pregnancy, and Kelsi's Hope.

Our next quarterly meeting will be held on Monday, January 20, 2026 at 2 pm in the Parish Hall. In January we also serve at the blood mobile. Contact Judy Rode or Sue Erickson if you'd be interested in helping prepare food or help serve for this event.

Christmas cards are for sale now. They are available individual or in boxes and you can find them in the coatroom.

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The manger leads to the cross. The cross leads to the empty tomb. And the empty tomb leads to you— to your December, your household, your fears, your need— with forgiveness, peace, and unshakable hope.

We sing: "Once He came in blessing, All our sins re-dressing; Came in likeness lowly, Son of God most holy; Bore the cross to save us, Hope and freedom gave us." (TLH 74, stanza 1)

May the Savior who came in humility fill your December with His light, steady your heart with His mercy, and draw you close through His Word and promise. Come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

Merry Christmas!
Rev. David Tilney
Vacancy Pastor

Member Directory

The 2026 Church Directory will be available in January. A copy of the old directory has been placed in the narthex where you may update the listings for yourself and any family members.

Offering Envelopes

Offering envelopes for 2026 will be placed in your mail boxes in early December. Please start to use the **pink** envelopes starting January 1, 2026.



Vital Statistics

Attendance and Finances

<u>Date</u>	<u>Attend</u>	<u>Offering</u>
Sun, Nov 2	69	\$6,245.00
Sun, Nov 9	54	\$4,210.00
Sun, Nov 16	59	\$3,925.00
Sun, Nov 23	68	\$1,000.00
Wed, Nov 26	Cancelled	
Sun, Nov 30	N/A	

(2025 Budget Income needed each Sunday - \$3,270.00)

December Birthdays

Dec 2	Lisa Baker Ethan Staab Donald Steffen
Dec 3	Nick Enninga
Dec 5	Ryan Luepke
Dec 10	Jeanne Gabbert
Dec 11	Julie Cuklanz
Dec 13	Kristi Klassen Katelyn Luepke
Dec 14	Colter Berends Pat Stengel Krystal Twedt
Dec 15	Rhett Brown
Dec 16	Darlene Yeager
Dec 17	Tracy Hammer Dan Hildahl
Dec 18	Judy Soderholm Otto Luepke
Dec 19	Henry Soukup
Dec 21	Alicia Lubrant Zachary Markgraf
Dec 22	DuWayne Galow
Dec 24	Maria Christensen
Dec 26	Nathan Canatsey
Dec 27	Vicki Patterson
Dec 28	Tyler Patterson Sydney Thompson
Dec 30	Janel Guertin
Dec 31	Taylor Hinz

Birthday Blessings to you all.

Please contact the church office
if we missed yours.

Financials as of 11-26-2025

Year to Date Actual Contributions	\$139,878.08
Year to Date Budgeted Income	<u>\$155,857.13</u>
Difference	(\$15,979.05)
Year to Date Actual Expenses	\$104,294.06
Year to Date Budgeted Expenses	<u>\$155,857.13</u>
Difference	\$51,563.07

SAC Groups will be our greeters and ushers.
 If this is your month to serve, please prayerfully consider
 where you are able to and willing to help.
 A new rotation of the SAC groups will start in 2026.
 SAC Group 3 will start the new year serving for January.

Group 1

Serving for December

Anderson, Rachel
 Berends, Anthony and Nicole
 Berends, Chris and Belinda
 Buchholz, Merlin and Sylvia
 Christensen, Brad and Maria
 Doose, Chad
 Doose, Greg and Susan
 Doose, Mike and Kristi
 Erickson, Wes and Sue
 Gatchell, Dorian and Melanie
 Guertin, Dave and Nancy
 Hammer, Nancy
 Hammer, Tracy
 Hempel, Tim and Jody
 Hildahl, Eric and Teresa
 Janiszewski, Jackie
 Johnson, Matthew
 Kotek, MacKenzie
 Markgraf, Kevin
 Odegard, Kody
 Phinney, Katie
 Putnam, Charlie
 Rode, Judy
 Ryer, Lisa
 Ryer, Shannon
 Schmidt, Jennifer
 Schulte, Richard and Kelly
 Staab, Tyler and Tara
 Steffen, Don
 Stengel, Rob
 Syring, Melodee

Daily Bible Readings for December

Dec 1 Lam 5 Psalm 147 Galatians 5:1–15
 Dec 2 Ezekiel Psalm 148 Galatians 5:16–26
 Dec 3 Ezekiel 2–3 Psalm 149 Galatians 6
 Dec 4 Ezekiel 4–5 Psalm 150 Ephes 1
 Dec 5 Ezekiel 6–7 Isaiah 40 Ephes 2
 Dec 6 Ezekiel 8–9 Isaiah 41 Ephes 3
 Dec 7 Ezekiel 10–11 Isaiah 42 Ephes 4:1–16
 Dec 8 Ezekiel 12–13 Isaiah 43 Ephes 4:17–32
 Dec 9 Ezekiel 14–15 Isaiah 44 Ephes 5:1–20
 Dec 10 Ezekiel 16 Isaiah 45 Ephesians 5:21–33
 Dec 11 Ezekiel 17 Isaiah 46 Ephes 6
 Dec 12 Ezekiel 18 Isaiah 47 Philippians 1:1–11
 Dec 13 Ezekiel 19 Isaiah 48 Philippians 1:12–30
 Dec 14 Ezekiel 20 Isaiah 49 Philippians 2:1–11
 Dec 15 Ezekiel 21–22 Isaiah 50 Philippians 2:12–30
 Dec 16 Ezekiel 23 Isaiah 51 Philippians 3
 Dec 17 Ezekiel 24 Isaiah 52 Philippians 4
 Dec 18 Ezekiel 25–26 Isaiah 53 Colos 1:1–23
 Dec 19 Ezekiel 27–28 Isaiah 54 Colos. 1:24–2:19
 Dec 20 Ezekiel 29–30 Isaiah 55 Colos. 2:20–3:17
 Dec 21 Ezekiel 31–32 Isaiah 56 Colos. 3:18–4:18
 Dec 22 Ezekiel 33 Isaiah 57 Luke 1:1–25
 Dec 23 Ezekiel 34 Isaiah 58 Luke 1:26–56
 Dec 24 Ezekiel 35–36 Isaiah 59 Luke 1:57–80
 Dec 25 Ezekiel 37 Isaiah 60 Luke 2:1–20
 Dec 26 Ezekiel 38–39 Isaiah 61 Luke 2:21–52
 Dec 27 Ezekiel 40–41 Isaiah 62 Luke 3:1–20
 Dec 28 Ezekiel 42–43 Isaiah 63 Luke 3:21–38
 Dec 29 Ezekiel 44–45 Isaiah 64 Luke 4:1–30
 Dec 30 Ezekiel 46–47 Isaiah 65 Luke 4:31–44
 Dec 31 Ezekiel 48 Isaiah 66 Luke 5:1–26

Social Activity Committee 2026 Serving Schedule

Group 3

Serving for January, May, September.

Group 4

Serving for February, June, October.

Group 1

Serving for March, July, November.

Group 2

Serving for April, August, December.

Group 3 Serving for January

Baker, Lisa
 Cuklanz, Larry and Nancy
 Duenwald, Karley
 Freitag, Avis
 Gabbert, Carol
 Galow, DuWayne and Karen
 Hegna, Rolland and RaeAnn
 Hewitt, Loretta
 Hildahl, Linda
 Hoff, Jason and Molly

Ims, Dorothy
 Iverson, Pam
 Johnson, Jennifer
 Just, Wes and Norma
 Kelly, Mary
 Kvam, Curtis
 Olson, LuAnn
 Peterson, LeRoy and Jan
 Quintal, Teresa
 Reinke, Darlene

Rigge, Anita
 Rush, Barb
 Schmidt, Douglas Jr. and Darla
 Steffen, Boyd
 Streich, Eugene
 Streich, Linda
 Trotter, Donnie and Jodi
 Ulven, Lorna
 Van Sickle, Eric and Jane
 Winters, Kelly

St. Paul Lutheran Church
Quarterly Voter's Meeting Minutes
September 21, 2025

(Covers period from June 22, 2025 to present.)

Meeting was called to order at 10:06 AM by Elder Larry Cuklanz and attended by 31 members.

Opening prayer was led by Church Elder Larry Cuklanz

Minutes from June's Quarterly Meeting and Special Voter's meeting (8/27 and 9/7) were+ reviewed. A motion was made by Tyler Staab and seconded by Dave Guertin to accept the minutes as presented. Motion passed.

Financial Report from May and the Mar through May Designated Projects were reviewed.

Expenses for the church have been within the budgeted numbers and show a surplus.

For Designated Projects:

- In/out monies for SAC group are typical. Purchases of supplies, coffee hour donations
- Shingling monies were paid out to Glacier for work completed.
- Landscaping purchased of a weed trimmer and incidentals in lawn care

A motion was made by Jim Wagner and seconded by Lanny Hoyer to accept the Financials as presented. Motion passed.

Pastoral Report – No Report

Membership Report

- Affirmation of faith – Nicole Berends
- Confirmation held September 21—confirmed were Sarah Jean Canatsey and Madelynn Kaye Staab

Board and Committee Reports

Board of Elders

- Thanksgiving Service will be held Wednesday, Nov 26 at 5 PM. NOTE: Modified to 5:30 PM on Oct 23rd
- Advent Services: Pastor not available on Wednesdays. When asked, a majority show of hands there will be no advent service.
- Christmas Eve/Day Services – At this time, there is no pastor available for the services, Dave is trying to locate a pastor and taking suggestions.

Board of Trustees

- The roof repair is complete. Remaining payment will be pulled from Thrivent for payment.
- The Council and Trustees were approached by Tammy Edman about Odell Rude memorial money being made available for the installation of a TV screen at the front of the church to be used during funerals, church services, etc. Suggestion was made to see if Shirley Hempel's Memorial would be a possible fund to be used.
- At this time, Otto is looking for feedback from the church members about the project. The group was presented with three part options from Ministries Technologies

85 inch TV at the front of the church (left side) about 7/8 ft high. Would be in front of stained glass and block banner. There would also be a small screen on the front of the balcony and a computer to operate.

Installation of video equipment to make live stream/recording possible.

Install screens in the Parish Hall.

Special committees

- Call committee report – Pastor Bradley Ferch from Immanuel Lutheran Church in Davenport, IA was called at a Special Voters Meeting on September 7th.

A motion was made by Tyler Staab and seconded by Lanny Hoyer to accept the committee reports as presented. Motion passed.

Old Business

- None

New Business

- By a hand vote, a decision was reached to hold a Potluck Christmas Dinner after church on December 7th
- A motion was made by Tyler Staab and seconded by Phyllis to hold the Quarterly Meeting on December 14th instead of December 21st. Motion passed.
- The District has been in contact regarding our Constitution and has asked for some grammatical and formatting changes, along with suggestions of changes. A committee was formed to work through these items. Consists of Luann Olson, Phyllis Schultz and Carol Gabbert

Announcements

- Next Board of Elders and Council meetings is November 11 at 6:30 and 7 PM respectively

Motion was made by Tyler Staab and seconded by Carol Podratz to Adjourn with the Lord's Prayer at 10:40 AM. Motion passed.

Submitted: Carol Gabbert - Council Secretary

(Unapproved by the Voter's but ok'd to publish by Church Council)

Snow Policy

If Sunday Worship Service is cancelled, all other events for the day are also cancelled. If YME School classes are cancelled due to the weather, all church events for that day are also cancelled. The closing can be heard on KMGM-FM (105.5), KKRC-FM (93.9), KDMA-AM (1460) and also will be posted on Facebook. In regards to worship services during the winter season, please remember to **use your best judgment** in terms of going out in wintry weather. If it is unsafe for you to be out (even in your own driveway), don't go out. Although Pastor is glad to visit you in the hospital, he would rather visit you in your home! So, be safe; missing church due to weather is not an offense to God; remember how much he cares for you too.



DECEMBER 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 8 am Men's Bible Study	3 6 pm Handbell Practice 6:45 pm Mixed Choir Practice	4 9 am Bldg Bridges Choir	5	6 4 pm Canatsey/Anderson Wedding
7 10 am Bake Sale 11 am Worship Service 12 pm Christmas Potluck Dinner 12:45 pm Confirmation Class	8	9 8 am Men's Bible Study 6:30 pm Board of Elders 7 pm Church Council	10 6 pm Handbell Practice 6:45 pm Mixed Choir Practice	11 9 am Bldg Bridges Choir	12	13
14 9:30 am Qtly Voters Meeting 11 am Communion Service 12:45 pm Confirmation Class	15	16	17 6 pm Handbell Practice 6:45 pm Mixed Choir Practice	18 9 am Bldg Bridges Choir	19 Newsletter Articles Due	20
21 10 am Coffee Time 11 am Worship Service 12:45 pm Confirmation Class	22	23	24 5 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service	25 Merry Christmas	26	27
28 10 am Coffee Time 11 am Communion Service	29	30	St. Paul Lutheran Church delivers "Dinner at Your Door"		<u>Elders</u> Brian Beyer Larry Cuklanz Dave Guertin Jim Rigge	
			<u>Acolytes</u> Sun 7 Nathan Canatsey Sun 14 Brielle Redepenning Sun 21 James Luepke Wed 24 Lucas Canatsey Sun 28 Nathan Canatsey	<u>Altar Guild</u> Sue Erickson		