



St. Paul Lutheran Church
1417 11th Street, P.O. Box 126
Wichita Falls, TX 76307



St. Paul Lutheran Church is a congregation of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

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Issue 1

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Pastor's Meditation

As the New Year unfolds, I am reminded that there are a lot of unknowns that come with it. Nobody knows, at least not yet, who will be heading to the Super Bowl, and we don't know whether or not we've come past the worst of Covid-19. In our daily lives we also do not know what tomorrow holds. Many of us would hope for a year of good health, time spent with family and friends, and making great new memories. The reality though is that we continue to live in a sinful world, we continue to struggle with our sinful nature, and the devil continues to prowl around looking for someone to devour. Between the things we are waiting to be revealed and what we already know, Scripture reminds us about the importance of gathering together as the church to encourage each other.

For instance, Malachi 3:16 says "Then those who feared the Lord spoke with one another." The context of this verse concerns the people of God who were distressed by what they saw around them. Evil was not only on the rise but also seemed to be prospering. The religious establishment seemed more interested in attaining worldly wealth and comfort than growing in faith. It was a distressing time for the Lord's people. Nevertheless, there was a group of people who feared the Lord and continued to meet and as the verse says "they spoke with one another." This verse is a reminder of the importance of continuing to meet regularly for worship, the Lord's Supper, and encouragement.

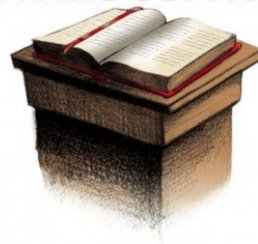
(Continued on page 2)

Our Weekly Divine Service Schedule

Sunday

9:00 a.m. Sunday School & Bible Class
10:15 a.m. Divine Service
(Holy Communion offered every Sunday)

Divine Service



Pastor's Meditation Cont.,

This theme is also present in the New Testament first in Acts 2:42, "And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers." The early Christians gathered to learn and grow from what the apostles taught. In addition to ongoing study and learning, there was time to enjoy fellowship, a meal, and prayers. Consider our practice today, gathering for worship, ongoing Bible studies that are offered, time to share prayers of this specific community, and yes, a meal! Worship and encouragement were not just key ingredients in the Old Testament, but we see it continuing to be a necessity since the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost.

The writer of Hebrews also admonishes people about how critical it is for Christians to continue to meet together. In Hebrews 10:25 we read, "not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near." This verse shows us that there were some who had developed the habit of no longer meeting. The tone of the verse shows concern for those who are not meeting regularly for encouragement. The words "...the Day drawing near" are meant to remind Christians that we are to be awake and vigilant watching, as we do not know the day or the hour when Jesus will return. We need to remember that with each passing day we are getting closer to either taking our last breath in this life or the time when Jesus will visibly return for everyone to see.

By continuing to gather together as God's people, we are reminded that we are not alone. We are also strengthened and fed by His precious Word and Sacrament that Jesus has overcome any tribulations that we might face in the new year. Plus, we are reminded that He is with us and will not forsake us.

So, as we enter into 2021 with all of its unknowns, my prayer is that we will be more vigilant in our gathering together, our time in Bible study, and perhaps, just maybe, a church meal and fellowship again! I miss all of that! May God bless all the families of St. Paul this next year and may God bless all of our endeavors!

In Christ's Love, +
Pastor Cody
Psalm 84:10

Stewardship

It's a new year. It's a time when we take stock of the year past in order to improve the year to come. It's a time when we sit down to plan and implement what we want to accomplish and even change. Part of that is planning our stewardship for the coming year. Often, we find this difficult and daunting and even joyless, but it doesn't have to be. In fact, it is really quite simple and full of joy. So, here are some tips to make that planning less stressful. You begin by answering these three questions:

Who are you?
To whom do I give?
And how much?

So, who are you? The Table of Duties in the *Luther's Small Catechism* informs us. Are you a hearer of God's Word? Are you a citizen of society? Are you a member of a family? Stewardship covers these three estates: church, society, and family. We don't particularly struggle to give to society or family. Our struggles, our difficulties, and our questions arise in giving to the Church.

So, what is our duty as members of the Church with regard to giving? Again, the Table of Duties, gives us a guide. If you are a hearer – a member of the Church who receives instruction – St. Paul taught: "Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches" (Gal. 6:6). This means the local congregation is primary. Your pastor is the one called to preach the Gospel to you and administer the Lord's blessed sacraments to you. Your congregation is the place where those things happen. Thus, when God calls us to give to the Church, He has the local congregation in mind. For "the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14).

How much do we give to the local congregation? Our only instructions are to give:

Regularly (1 Cor. 6:1–2);
Proportionally (1 Cor. 16:1–2; 2 Cor. 8:12);
Generously (2 Cor. 8:20);
Of our first fruits (Gen. 4:4; Prov. 3:9; Lev. 27:30); and
With a spirit of eagerness (2 Cor. 9:2), earnestness (2 Cor. 8:7), cheerfulness (2 Cor. 9:7), and love (2 Cor. 8:23).

In other words, giving to the Church is not to be an afterthought, given after everything else is spent. In this way, it is deliberate. We give regularly – weekly, biweekly, monthly, quarterly, or yearly – keeping in mind our own strengths, weaknesses, and limitations. We set it aside beforehand – before anything else is spent..

From those first fruits, we set aside a proportionate and generous amount. Ten percent was the standard for the Israelites. This was a command for the ancient Israelites. We can give as much as we want, but ask yourself: Do we really want to be less generous than was commanded of the Israelites? Is the job of the New Testament Church bigger or smaller than the job given to Israel?

And how are we to give it? We give it with eagerness and earnestness. We give it cheerfully and with love, not out of compulsion. For through the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments, God has made us His children, forgiven us all our sins, given us grace upon grace, promised us life everlasting with Him in His kingdom, and filled us with His own Spirit, the Holy Spirit. This makes giving a joy, as Jesus said, "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

It's that easy. And it is joyful. For in stewardship, our gracious and giving Lord invites us to take part in the work that He accomplishes here on earth, providing for the ongoing preaching of the Gospel as well as those who are in need. Taking part in that makes all our work holy – work that is done in service to the Lord as priestly members of His kingdom. (www.lcms.org)

I would like to offer a very special thank you to all who volunteered and represented the church during the Advent & Christmas seasons! All the events, meals, and many worship services around that time of the year can be exhausting, but you did your part and made it extra special! I hope that you will continue your strong leadership and volunteerism into the next year!
Pastor Cody
Psalm 84:10



— WICHITA FALLS —
FAITH MISSION
 EVERY STORY MATTERS

Faith Mission is currently in need of the following items: Bath towels and wash clothes, Blankets, underwear (men's and women's all sizes), deodorant, coffee, tea, potatoes, and hams.

Feel free to bring any items and leave them at the designated table in the Fellowship Hall. The staff greatly appreciate all of our donations.

Correction/Addition in Directory

Pastor and Michelle Cody's Zip code is 76310

Bo & Glenda Hardi's Address:
 4150 Candlewood Circle, WF 76308

FUN AND GAMES

Our next fun and games date will be Sunday, January 3, at 4:00PM. Come out and join us for dominoes and cards. Bring your favorite snack to share and bring a friend along with you! See y'all there!



The *St. Paul Epistle* is published monthly by:
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The Rev. Rick Cody Pastor
 Cell Phone: 832-745-3314 †
 Email: revcody11@gmail.com

Kathy Schkade.....Organist
 Darla English.....Organist

Lisa Schur Parish Office Worker



Please Pray

Prayers of God's People

FOR - THOSE WITH CANCER:
 Jeanette Evans, Janie Khlum, Dennis Keethler, Lee Shores, Kay Castleberry, Guin Huneycutt, Dan Cullers, Chad Brown, Staci Myles, Sally Handrick, Yvette Groover, and David Mitchell.

PHYSICAL AND OTHER CONCERNS:
 Betty Corder, Brantley French, Duncan Hibbard, Ronnie Newman, Kellen Osborne, Mark Lehman, Tyler Sherrod, Ellen Fisher, Virginia Martinez, Jack Spence, Jesse Flick, David Baker, and Janice Wiechman.

HOMEBOUND/SHUT-IN MEMBERS: Dorothy Kutzler (Royal Estates), Virginia Hendricks (Rolling Meadows), Lois Kramer (Rolling Meadows), and Jesse Flick.

ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL: Whitney Brown (Air Force), Eli Buckmaster (Marine Corps), Brian Clayton (Army), Kate Ridinger Dozier (Navy), Zachary Wied (Army), Jaydon Martinez (Navy), Trent Meisel (USAF), Richard Townes (USAF), and Tim Rosenthal (USAF).



Thank You!

Michelle and I would like to offer you all a very heartfelt thank you to the congregation for the generous Christmas gift that was given to us by the congregation this year. We are truly blessed to be here at St. Paul and look forward with much anticipation to see what God will do with us together as Pastor and people! Thank you again for thinking of us! We love you all!

Pastor & Michelle



LYF JANUARY ACTIVITIES

We would like to see if there are any Jr. high and/or any high school aged YOUTH that would be interested in getting together to discuss future activities that we could do to get our

youth group started up again. If you are available for something like this, please contact Pastor Cody on his cell phone or by text 832-745-3314.

Thank you to everyone who donated money, items for auction, and time to make our Give it Away Project a success. We were able to help 20 families for Christmas! It is a blessing to be able to help families in need!

Dear St. Paul family,
Thank you for the sweet Christmas surprise, it was so kind and generous of you to think of me, and is very much appreciated.

Darla English

Dear St. Paul family,
Thank you for the very nice Christmas gift. It was very kind and very much appreciated.

Lisa

Thank You

We wish to thank those who served last month:

Organists: Kathy Schkade, Darla English, Don Bruns

Elders: Kenneth Schkade, William Parker, Ben English

Sound man/PowerPoint: Ben English

Altar Guild: Debbie Truette, Lisa Schur (setup) Judy Hancock, Delores Palmatary (take-down) (And all members!)

Greeters: Nancy Martinez, Hank & Judy Hancock, Del Tech, Penny Becker, Leann Roten, Michelle Cody, Delores Palmatary, Ruth Rathgeber, Pam Marten, and all greeters.

Ushers: Randal Schoppa, Eugene Kruger, ...and all who volunteer on Sundays

Church Sexton: Randal Schoppa

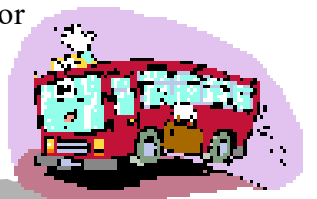
All Church Council members

All Board and Committee members

Treasurer: Kathy Kabell

Parish Office Worker: Lisa Schur

If you or someone you know needs a ride to Divine Service or any other church activity, please call the church office at (940) 322-6112 and we will see what we can do to arrange that for you.





Memorials/Tributes

In Memory of Tommy McFerran and Wife to the Elevator Fund by:
Larry and Nancy Martinez

In Memory of Tommy McFerran and Wife to the Elevator Fund by:
Virginia Martinez

In Memory of Tommy McFerran and wife to the Elevator Fund by:
Ruth Rathgeber.

In Honor of the English Family to St. Paul Lutheran Church by Sanda Mitchell (Ben's mother).

A big THANK YOU to each and every one who assisted in the Christmas Gift Project for the residents at the Courtyard Gardens. A big thank you Ruth Rathgeber, Delores Palmatary, Darla English, Pastor Cody, Michelle Cody, Ken Schkade, Kathy Schkade, and Lisa Schur for wrapping all of those gifts, and anyone else who has not been mentioned in helping in some way for those who needed a little help this Christmas. With your generous donations and the help from Thrivent, we were able to provide Christmas to 51 residents.



Adult Education

The Adult Bible Class meets every Sunday morning before Divine Service. Our goal is to have 40 people in Adult Bible Study. We want to come together and study God's Word, and reap the benefits that God promises to those who remain in His Word (John 8:31-32). We are now studying the book of 1 Corinthians. I think that you will find this class interesting and thought-provoking. Please plan on joining us each Sunday morning at 9:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall.



Because of the continued interest in the Adult Catechism Classes, Pastor Cody is teaching **Continuous Adult Catechism Instruction** to study together what it is that Lutherans believe, teach, and confess. This class meets weekly on Monday nights at 7:00 p.m. Those wanting to become members of St. Paul can join the class at any time, and once through the series of lessons, they can be confirmed into communicant membership of the church. If you are interested in taking this class, please come out and join us! In those times when no one is there for new membership the group studies a book of the Bible or a specific topic.



Sunday school for all ages starts at 9:00AM each Sunday morning. The Scriptures are clear, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and **when he is old, he will not depart from it.**" (Prov. 22:6). Bring the kids out and stay for Adult Bible study yourselves and teach them the proper habit to be in as the spiritual leaders of your homes! See y'all there!

Middle School Youth Catechism Class

We have young people that will be gathering together each week to demonstrate to their parents, and their Lord, the importance of this journey in their faith walk. Catechesis is the teaching of our Lord that is drawn from the Holy Scriptures, confessed in the Small Catechism, and expressed in Divine Service. Please pray for them as they study the Word of God and complete this important stage in their lives. The class is open to any and all from the 5th grade through the 8th grade. We meet on Wednesday evenings at 5:00 p.m.

This past year, 2020, for all practical purposes, could be written off as one of the worst years of our lives. With the COVID-19 pandemic, school closures, job losses, shelter-in-place orders, mask mandates, sickness and even death of family and friends, there wasn't much for which to rejoice. But if that's the way you want to look at it, I'm sorry, but may I propose a different perspective?

This year for St. Paul was a very special year! At the beginning of our 2020 year, from January to the beginning of March, we were nearing having 70 people in weekly worship and we were having on average anywhere from 14-20 visitors a week. We were on the proverbial "roll!" That is until Covid-19 hit. Then everything just froze in place. However, even in the midst of discouragement, we knew times were difficult for many people, and so we wanted to adopt a way to be a blessing to others and give back some of the blessings that God has so generously give us. Therefore, we adopted a fantastic money raising campaign called, "Give it Away!" and did we not! We certainly did!

The "Give it Away" campaign grew in excitement as the year went by. We went from a challenge of raising \$5,000.00 (which we surpassed) to simply give away \$250 to 20 families in need, to doing another project called the "Gobble Give Away" whereby we obtained 20 turkeys and gave that away, as well, to the local Faith Mission Homeless Shelter. We then obtained 20 hams with a Thrivent card and gave the 20 families a ham along with the \$250 gift of money. In that same gifting there were goodie bags made for the children of the households. Finally, we were able to adopt for the second year in a row, the 50 residents of the Courtyard Gardens Retirement Home, and give them all a lap blanket and other personal care items. We then walked around the building and sang Christmas carols to the residents standing in their rooms by their windows to maintain proper social distancing.

So, from the way I see it, 2020, even though there were many challenges for many families, turned out to be a blessing for many...including the people who worked so hard getting everything ready to be given away, and for those who delivered the gifts.

I would like to personally thank each and every member of St. Paul who donated their resources, time, and prayers on behalf of our "Give it Away" campaign. I hope and pray that we can continue to do this in the future and continue to be a blessing to many, many others. I can't wait to see what God can do with our gifts!

May God bless us to be a blessing to many in 2021! The Lord be with us all!

In Christ's Love, +

Pastor Cody
Psalm 84:10

God's People at Work during January

Elders

William Parker
Kenneth Schkade
Ben English

Ushers

Randal Schoppa
Eugene Krueger
Hank Hancock

Altar Duty

Set Up: Debra Truette &
Lisa Schur
Take Down: Judy Han-
cock & Delores Palmatary

Greeters

Jan. 3-Keven Copeland, Ruth
Rathgeber
Jan. 10-Del Tech , Penny Becker
Jan. 17-Leanne Roten, Michelle Cody
Jan. 24-Delores Palmatary, Ruth
Rathgeber
Jan. 31- Pam Marten, Nancy Martinez

Readers

Jan. 3—Ken Schkade
Jan. 10—Kevin Copeland
Jan. 17—Eugene Krueger
Jan. 24—Kenny Theimer
Jan. 31— Pastor

Days to Celebrate in January

Birthdays

3rd	Phillip Anderson	24th	Mary Ann Martinez
6th	Kirk Horton	27th	Nancy Martinez
9th	Michelle Rangel, Peggy Dauffenbach	29th	James Martinez; Bobbi Wright
11th	Pam Marten	31st	Janna Buckmaster
13th	Lacey Rangel		
20th	Abigail Weichman; Jim Reeves		
22nd	Freddie Smith		



Wedding Anniversaries

28- Troy & Katey Lewis 32 years



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HAPPY NEW YEAR

Please continue to pray on a daily basis for:

- ✦ Pastor, Michelle Cody
- ✦ Kathy (Organist) & Kenneth Schkade
- ✦ Darla (Organist) & Ben English
- ✦ Lisa Schur, Parish Office Worker
- ✦ All other staff members at St. Paul Lutheran Church
- ✦ The leadership of our church.
- ✦ The mission of Paul Lutheran Church.
- ✦ All those sick or suffering in our church family.
- ✦ Church unity.

Baby Shower!

A diaper and baby wipes shower honoring Baby Townes and the Townes family will be held after church on Sunday, January 10, in the fellowship hall. Social distancing will be observed and individually wrapped snack items served. Pampers Diapers of various sizes and pampers sensitive wipes are preferred, but Kyle says any kind is greatly appreciated! We look forward to showering the Townes family with love!

**Calling All Board and Committee Members for Brainstorming Seminar
Saturday, January 16, in the Fellowship Hall**

9:00AM-12:00PM All Boards and Committee Members are invited to join.

Quarterly Voter's Meeting Sunday, February 14

Our next quarterly Voter's Meeting will be held immediately following Divine Service on Sunday, February 14, in the Fellowship Hall.

The **LWML Ladies Group** will meet on Thursday, January 21, at 9:15AM. All ladies interested are very welcome to join them!



Our **Women's Bible Study** meets on the 2nd & 4th Thursday of the month of January at 9:30AM. They invite all women interested to come for some thought-provoking bible study and great fellowship!

Thank you to those who donated Poinsettias for the Altar

Randal D. Schoppa- In Memory of: Schoppa Family. Streit Family
In Honor of: Pastor R. Cody & Michelle Cody, Sgt. Garland Prince, & Members of St. Paul

Deanna Schroeder—In Honor of: Ken & Kathy Schkade & Ben & Darla English

Hank & Judy Hancock—In Memory of Loves One's

Delores A. LaBlanc- In Memory of James Wiechman

The Troy Lewis Family- In Memory of those members of church who have passed away this year and those who were close to the congregation

Leanne Roten- In Memory of Hank & Barbara Roten (Parents)

Tina Anderson- In Memory of Kenneth

Peggy Daufenbach- In Memory of Claudia Kelley, Hank & Barbara Roten, Jackie Parker and James Wiechman

Ken & Kathy Schkade- In Memory of Walter & Hilda Grueber , August & Margeret Schkade. Our Parents

Ben & Darla English- In Memory of Mom, Norma Flick
In Honor & Memory of our parents Jesse Flick; Sanda & Bobby Mitchell
In Memory of Norma English and Robert English

Lisa Schur- In Memory of H.P. Schur, Theresa Schur,. Paul Schur Jr., Bettye Olson, and Deborah Frank
In Honor of Pastor R. Cody & Michelle Cody

Lois Kramer- In Memory or Loved one's

Bo & Glenda Hardi—In Honor of Jesus' birth

Del Tech- In Memory of family and friends