

# ST. PAUL VISITOR DECEMBER 2023

JOIN US EACH SUNDAY  
AT 10:00AM FOR  
IN PERSON WORSHIP  
OR ON FACEBOOK

721 12TH AVENUE  
HUNTINGTON, WV 25701  
304-525-9630  
WWW.STPAULHUNTINGTON.  
ORG



The Mission Of St. Paul  
Evangelical Lutheran  
Church Is To Celebrate  
And Proclaim To All The  
Saving Grace Of Jesus  
Christ In Word And  
Deed.

ALL ARE  
WELCOME  
HERE 

## ADVENT MIDWEEK

6:00pm Light meal served in the Fellowship Hall

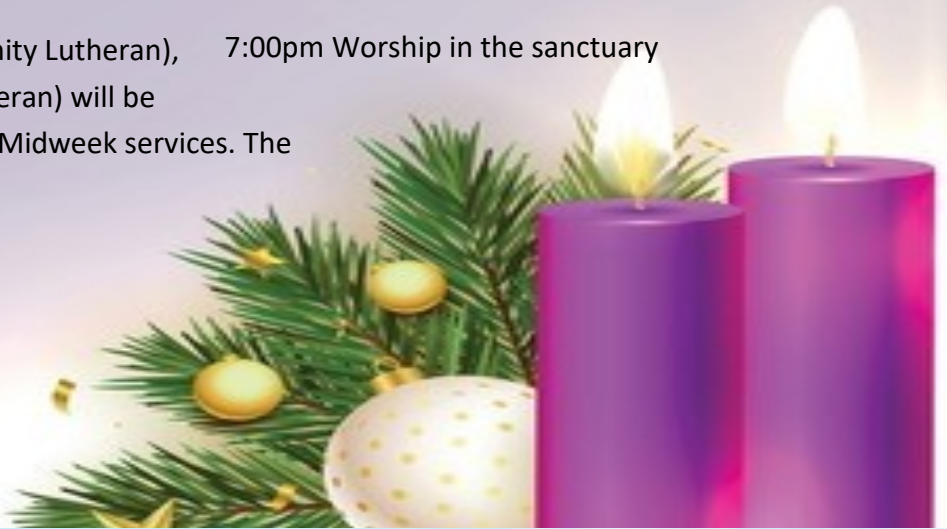
Pastor Mackey, Pastor Randy Richardson (Trinity Lutheran),  
and Pastor Darick Biondi (Cross of Grace Lutheran) will be  
rotating between churches for Advent Midweek services. The  
schedule for St. Paul is below:

7:00pm Worship in the sanctuary

December 6 Pastor Darick Biondi

December 13 Pastor Randy Richardson

December 20 Pastor Kevin Mackey



**CHRISTMAS PROGRAM PRACTICE: All youth will meet on the following dates to practice:**

**December 3 after worship**

**December 6 at 6:30pm**

**December 10 after Annual Meeting**

**December 13 at 6:30pm**

**December 16 from 12:00pm-2:00pm**



The handbell Choir will be performing during the Children's Christmas Program on December 17 and on Christmas Eve. They will practice on the following dates:

December 3 after worship

December 6 at 5:30pm

December 13 at 5:30pm

December 16 at 11:00am. Please see Barb Garnett if you are interested in playing.

## Pastor's Reflections

As I look over the December 2023 calendar here at St. Paul I am once again thrilled. As the pages of this newsletter open you see how many things we have going on here in December. This of course is a familiar sight for us here in December. I imagine it is the same in many parishes throughout the country. December seems to bring out activity. It is the end of the calendar year so much of what we do is focused on the "stuff of the world" – meetings and Mission Finance Plans (budget) and electing new leaders. I am sure many of you will be planning family gatherings and parties.

Amid all this busyness the church has a season called Advent. Many of you know Advent is my favorite season mostly because of the traditions of my family that I now try to continue with Alex. In Advent we hear words like prepare and get ready and stay awake from interesting characters in the Biblical narrative – especially a guy named John the Baptist. The themes of Advent are generally about preparation and readiness – not for parties and decorating but for Jesus.

Don't get me wrong, I love all the stuff that we do extra in December. One of most favorites is the Good Gifts Christmas tree that we here at St. Paul contribute to every year. It's a wonderful tradition that is a part of our discipleship outreach to the world. We do this of course through ELCA World Hunger. The other favorite is the Christmas Basket ingathering we do to help those in need here in the Tri-state area. It is exciting to see how many people participate in this servant project every year. Sometimes I know the Social Ministry committee wonders if enough people will sign up. Every year you all step up. Thank you for your servant hearts for those in our community.

There is a saying that I am sure you have heard much these days of Advent: Jesus is the reason for the season. That's very true and maybe a slogan like this helps us remember why we do special things in Advent/ December.

One last thing to remember is that we have midweek worship services beginning December 6. Pastors Randy Richardson and Darick Biondi will be leading you in worship and preaching two of the three Wednesdays. I will lead the other. My prayer is that this additional worship time will enrich your Spirit. It is also my prayer that this time will be an opportunity to prepare, pause and ponder once again for the birth of Jesus – Immanuel – God made flesh.

Blessings and Peace,  
Pastor KLM <><



## ELCA GOOD GIFTS

Our ELCA Good Gifts tree will soon be up in the narthex! By choosing a tag from the tree and donating the specified amount to ELCA Good Gifts you are helping those in need throughout the world. Gifts can be made in honor or in memory of loved ones.

It's simple:

1. Choose a tag from the tree.
2. Place a check with specified amount in the offering plate ( or turn in to the office)
3. Give the tag to someone as a gift given in their honor.

The church office will send the money in to ELCA gifts for you.

Please make sure you indicate on your check that the money is for ELCA Good Gifts.

Dear St. Paul Congregation,

It seems like every other time I am writing this newsletter I am travelling. This time, I am in Medellin, Colombia, at a 5-day piano festival. The festival is hosted by a university in the south of Medellin (EAFIT University). 21 students were admitted (among them one of my Marshall students: Calvin Riggs), and there are 7 faculty members. Each student gets one lesson per day with a different professor and plays for one masterclass (also a lesson, but in front of all the other student participants and professors). This means, the students experience 6 out of the 7 professors' teaching styles. There are student recitals on Tuesday and Thursday, and a faculty recital on Wednesday. It's a very dense schedule, but I had time to take my student Calvin for some sightseeing on Sunday before the start of the festival.

A fun little story: One of the best-known children's books in Germany is called "The Trip to Panama". It's about a little bear and a little tiger, who find a wooden crate that smells of bananas and has the words Panama written on it. Little bear convinces little tiger to embark on a journey to find Panama, because he thinks it's the most beautiful place in the world. They do find Panama eventually, but in an unexpected way, much closer to home. My layover on the trip to Colombia was, you guessed it, in Panama.

We already started rehearsing the songs for the children's service on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of Advent (thank you, Jill!) and we will have a nice mix of special music for Christmas Eve, including horn, violin and cello, the bell choir, and others. As always, if you would like to join the St. Paul choir (rehearsals on Wednesday night's at 7 pm downstairs in the choir room), please don't be shy and let me know!

See you very soon,  
Henning



As we transfer from the season of Thankfulness and into the season of sharing the Good News of Jesus' birth, I appreciate all the precious moments in between. We first appreciate what we have and give thanks to God in prayer and rejoice daily. This month, we have focused on our gifts and sharing them with others. We have taken time to be thankful for each other and others that help us along the way. We remember to appreciate our families, friends and teachers and to share with grace and have gratitude.

The youth have prepared cards and sentiments for our Veterans for Veteran's Day. The St. Paul Girl Scouts hosted a Friendsgiving and collected canned goods for our Christmas Baskets and made poppy wreaths to give to the Veterans as well. We enjoyed the Blessing of the Quilts and commemorated Betsy Ross for sewing the American flag and starting an era of women sewing and sharing together. So many families will enjoy the gifts of our quilters this Christmas. There is nothing better than being wrapped in the warmth and love of a homemade quilt. This is just another way we share God's love.

The youth have been active this month. We have joined together on Wednesdays and Sundays to practice songs, signing and readings for the Christmas program. "The Savior Has Come" is the title of our Christmas program and Nativity play. The younger youth created and voted on the title. Our group is a little smaller this year but they have been focusing on using their gifts and they are AMAZING! I am proud of all of these children who love rejoicing and singing praises to the Lord. We will have special music with a trumpet, bell choir, a duet, and some special signing and singing. All the youth love to share the story of Jesus' birth. Each year, the program is so special because the children use their gifts to express their love for Jesus and share the good news that Jesus is born! We will continue to be children of God and share God's love and the Good News with all we meet.

Today's Devotion:

The Language of Heaven

Come into his city with songs of Thanksgiving. Come into his courtyards with songs of praise. Psalm 100 :4

When you live your life, praising and thanking Me for the blessings I give you each day, your life becomes filled with miracles. It is as if a blindfold has been removed from your eyes. With your eyes wide open, you see more and more of my glorious riches. So let your thankfulness sing out, my praises! A thankful heart keeps you focused on Me and what I'm doing in your life instead of trying to be in control, you relax and make Me the center of your life. This is the way I created you to live and it is a way of JOY! Your joyful praises are the language of heaven, and the true language of your heart.

I find it so fitting when the Holy Spirit works in us, through us, and among us. God is AWESOME!

May you all feel loved this day and always. May you treasure the gifts you have been given. May you share your love and heart through your gifts and talents. May we all find peace in God's love and Grace. Amen.

Your Loving Sister in Christ,

Jill



The Savior Has Come

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM  
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17  
10:00AM



# Prayer Shawl Ministry

Prayer shawls are available in the narthex if you would like to give one to someone in need of comfort and prayer. Cards are also available to give with the shawls. These shawls are made by members of St. Paul and are offered free of charge.



Dear All:

thank you so much for the prayers and concern during my recent treatment. You have made us feel very much part of the church family. Thank you,

Dan and Edie Beals

## CRIDLIN NEEDS



Cridlin Food and Clothing Pantry is in need of gently used towels, blankets, and sheets. Please leave your donations in the narthex.

CAN YOU HELP?



## Cridlin Food and Clothing Pantry

For December we will be collecting boxes of cereal. Please leave your donations in the container in the narthex.



## What is the Backpack Food Program?

Each week during the school year we put together bags of food for children at Southside Elementary who may not have enough food for the weekend.

## How many children do we help?

Each week we provide food for 25 children.

## How can I help?

You can purchase items for the backpacks! See the list of suggested items below. Please bring your items to the church and leave them in the container in the narthex.

## What can I donate?

- Pop Tarts
- single serving ravioli
- ramen noodles
- single serving soup
- single serving mac and cheese
- tuna and cracker packs
- fruit cups
- individually packaged beef sticks
- single serving applesauce
- single serving beef-a-roni
- individual shelf stable milk drink boxes



## BOOK CLUB

December 6 at  
10:00am in the parlor

We will be discussing  
"The Memory Keeper's  
Daughter" by Kim  
Edwards

Please join us!



2 Meredith Brumfield  
3 Brice Dowis  
5 Natalee Utley  
8 Susie Wagner  
9 Barbara Garnett  
27 Brier Wagner; Aryah Freels  
30 Ingeborg White



Our condolences to the family of Ernie Golder. Ernie passed away this month. Services are pending.



## December Anniversaries

27 Neil and Ruthann Arneson  
30 Carl and Creigh Pemberton  
31 James and Jill May

## WE PRAY FOR:



- LaDonna; Al, Helen, John, Stephen, Barbara, Mike, Mandy, Becky,
- Dan, Josh, Gloria, Frank, Marty and the family of Ernie Golder.

If you would like to add someone to the prayer list please call the church office.



## DAILY DEVOTIONAL IN YOUR INBOX

The readings listed below are emailed to the congregation Monday-Friday along with a suggestion for contemplating the scripture. If you are not currently receiving the daily devotional and would like to please contact the church office.

November 27-December 1: Isaiah 64:1-9, Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19, I Corinthians 1:3-9, Mark 13:24-37  
December 4-8: Isaiah 40:1-11, Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13, 2 Peter 3:8-15a, Mark 1:1-8  
December 11-15: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11, Psalm 126, I Thessalonians 5:16-24, John 1:6-8, 19-28  
December 18-22: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16, Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26, Romans 16:25-27  
Luke 1:26-38  
December 25-29: Isaiah 61:10--62:3, Psalm 148, Galatians 4:4-7, Luke 2:22-40

# Christmas Eve Candlelight Service



*December 24*

*7:00pm*

**Join us for  
special music  
starting at  
6:30pm**



*Advent Calendars  
and Devotional*



ADVENT CALENDARS AND  
DEVOTIONAL BOOKS ARE AVAILABLE IN THE NARTHEX. PICK ONE UP TODAY!

ADVENT STARTS  
DECEMBER 6



Poinsettias will be \$15.00 each this year. The Music and Worship Committee has decided to donate \$5.00 of each purchase to Cridlin Food and Clothing Pantry. Forms for ordering are in the Sunday bulletin. Please make checks out to St. Paul and write "Poinsettia" on the memo line.



**Deadline for ordering is  
December 10.**

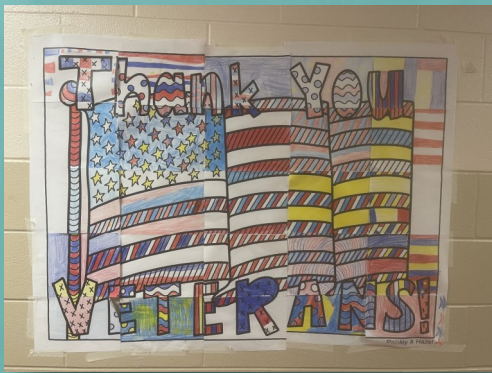
**ST. PAUL CHRISTMAS CARD  
MAILBOX IS OPEN FOR  
BUSINESS!**



Our mailbox, built by Bob Winterhoff, is back in the narthex and waiting for your cards. If you would like to give a Christmas Card to someone in the congregation please place your card(s) in the box. Be sure and check each week to see if there are cards waiting for you to pick up!!



We will be decorating the church on December 16 beginning at 9:00am. Please come and help if you can...many hands make light work!



Veteran's Day and Friendsgiving



Blessing of the Quilts on November 12.



## NEW CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP SERVICE

We are in the beginning stages of planning a Wednesday night contemporary service to begin in early 2024. Our hope is to attract a different audience who cannot (or maybe doesn't want to) attend on Sunday mornings. If you have any thoughts on how best to accomplish this or would like to take part in making this happen feel free to reach out to Pastor Mackey or Barbara Garnett.



## WORSHIP HELPERS FOR DECEMBER

December 3

Reader: Mary Lou Fricke  
Assisting Minister: Ruthann Arneson  
Communion Deacon: Norma Gensler  
Acolyte: Daniel Kist  
Flowers: Linda Hay  
Bread: Ruthann Arneson  
Ushers: Neil and Ethan Arneson

December 24 Morning

Reader: Steve Golder  
Assisting Minister: David Stuart  
Acolyte: Daniel Kist  
Ushers: Neil and Ethan Arneson

December 10

Reader: Norma Gensler  
Assisting Minister: Norma Gensler  
Communion Deacon: Steve Golder  
Acolyte: Daniel Kist  
Flowers: Anne Graybeal  
Bread: Ruthann Arneson  
Ushers: Neil and Ethan Arneson

December 24 Evening

Reader: Owen Murray  
Assisting Minister: Steve Golder  
Communion Deacon: Jenny Murray  
Acolyte: Daniel Kist  
Bread: Ruthann Arneson  
Ushers: Neil and Ethan Arneson

December 17

Reader: Children's Program  
Assisting Minister: Linda Schneider  
Communion Deacon: Creigh Pemberton  
Acolyte: Daniel Kist  
Flowers: Bernadette Wellman  
Bread: Ruthann Arneson  
Ushers: Neil and Ethan Arneson

December 31

Reader: Barb Garnett  
Assisting Minister: Keith Wellman  
Communion Deacon: Bernadette Wellman  
Acolyte:  
Flowers:  
Bread: Ruthann Arneson  
Ushers: Neil and Ethan Arneson

Sanctuary Lamp  
KV and Leng Chin

ALTAR GUILD

Tim and Cheryl Conzett



# Adult Forum

Adult Forum class  
will not meet in  
December.  
Beginning in

January we will be discussing the book, "What I Wish My Christian Friends Knew about Judaism" by Robert Schoen. You can order the book on Amazon or let Kathy know and she can order it for you. The cost is \$16.95.



The annual congregational meeting will be held on Sunday December 10 after worship. We will be voting on new Council members, passing the Mission Finance Plan (budget) and discussing other business.

# December 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Advent 1 10:00am Worship 11:15am Program Practice and Bell Practice	1:00pm Woman's Club		10:00am Book Club 5:30 Bell practice 6:00pm Meal 6:30pm youth practice 7:00pm Worship 7:30pm Choir			
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Advent 2 10:00am Worship 11:15am Annual Meet- ing Program practice after meeting			5:30 Bell practice 6:00pm Meal 6:30pm youth practice 7:00pm Worship 7:30pm Choir			9:00am Hanging of the Greens 11:00am Bell practice 12-2pm Dress Rehearsal
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Advent 3 10:00am Children's Christmas Program Christmas Basket pick-up			6:00pm Meal 7:00pm Worship 7:30pm Choir			
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Advent 4 10:00am Worship 7:00pm Christmas Eve Worship with candle lighting	Office closed	Office closed				
31						





### CONTACT US :

Reverend Kevin L. Mackey  
pastor@stpaulhuntington.org  
724-212-9393

Kathy Mackey, church secretary  
secretary@stpaulhuntington.org  
304-525-9630

# ST. PAUL MINISTRIES



Quilting



School Backpack Program



Christmas Baskets



Cool to be a Christian Club



Camp Luther



Lutheran Youth Organization



Worship in the Park



Trunk or Treat



Prayer Shawl Ministry



Blessing of the Animals



Christmas in August



Vacation Bible School

## CONNECT WITH US



### FACEBOOK

St. Paul Lutheran Church and St. Paul Lutheran Congregation Group



### WEBSITE

www.stpaulhuntington.org



### YOUTUBE

St. Paul Lutheran Church Huntington WV

