

ST. PAUL'S EVANGELICAL CHURCH

December 2023 NEWSLETTER

100 N. Fremont St., Lewiston, MN 55952

Services for December

- Dec. 3rd: 9:00 am Advent 2 Praise Worship w / communion
Dec. 10th: 9:00 am Advent 3 Worship
Dec. 17th: 9:00 am Advent 4 Worship w / communion.
Sunday School No Rehearsal
Christmas program
Dec. 24th: **No morning service.**
4:00 pm Christmas Eve
Dec. 31st: 9:00 am Lessons and Carols service.



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Looking for a unique Christmas gift?

Pastor Tami, and now St. Paul's Church, has numerous Prayer Shawls to give away due to the generosity of Karen Groth, Pastor Tami's mother who knits these prayer shawls as her own personal ministry, and finds joy in giving away as many as possible. Do you know someone who would appreciate a Prayer Shawl? Let Pastor Tami know!



Office Hours

Tues-Thurs

8:15 am—12:15 pm

With winter coming, there may be time bad weather keeps us from having services or meetings at St. Paul's We will post the cancellations on KTTC and you will find it on the ticker-tape at the bottom of the screen. In the past, if school is cancelled, then any meetings or service at St. Paul's will also be canceled. Your well-being is more important.



However, if you see a buffalo in a snow storm, you probably are in the wrong state, and you shouldn't be outside anyway. Just saying.

*And Mary said,
 “My soul magnifies the Lord,
 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior”
 --Luke 1:46-47*

“Joy is the infallible sign of the presence of God.”
 —Father Pierre Teilhard De Chardin

Dear friends in Christ,

One of the reasons Christmastime is a favorite season for me is that it seems easier to get others to join me in seeking out moments of joy. From hearing favorite Christmas carols to twinkling Christmas lights it is as if there is a conspiracy to find joy around every corner.

The two verses quoted from the Gospel of Luke above are the beginning of Mary’s song of praise, also known as the Magnificat. Mary sings this song of praise while visiting Elizabeth and Elizabeth greeted her with praise and blessing declaring: “as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy” (Luke 1:44; that leaping child would become known as John the Baptist). It is all about praise and joy, and that praise and joy came right in the middle of overwhelming challenges for Mary.

Mary sings this song of praise to God even though at the time her family and likely her entire village were not present for the angel Gabriel’s announcement, and so it was natural for Mary to flee to an older relative (Elizabeth) not only to confirm that Elizabeth was also having a special baby as Mary had been told by the Angel Gabriel, but also to receive the comfort she so needed from her relative Elizabeth.

Comfort and joy!!

Comfort and joy are two things we commonly seek as well.

I wonder if this is one of the reasons The Magnificat has been one of my very favorite scripture passages. I also love the many many songs based on this scripture passage, including *Canticle of the Turning* (My soul cries out), *Magnificat*, and other newer praise songs inspired by this beautiful song Mary sings from her heart. Next time you are looking for words to praise God, I encourage you to look to Luke 1:46-55 for inspiration.

And as we continue to look for God’s presence, including in the most unexpected place, may we find joy upon joy even in the midst of life’s challenges. To encourage us to look for God in unexpected places and honor both the challenges and joys, we’ll continue to use Kate Bowler’s resources to bless the Advent we actually have rather than painting images that do not exist in our realities this season.

I hope and pray that you find both comfort and joy this season, including at our various special worship services and other events. Peace, comfort and joy to you as we prepare to celebrate Christ Jesus’ birth.

Yours in Christ,
 Pastor Tami Groth

text or call 507-722-0256

Email pastor.lewiston.mn@gmail.com

You are also welcome to connect with me at <https://www.facebook.com/pastor.tami.groth>

Greeting Cards!

Would you be willing to take a minute to write a card (or color a picture) and send it to one of our elders? The thing that I share when I get to visit our elders who can't always make it to worship is that, "Just because you can't come to church on Sunday, doesn't make you any less a part of the church. We get to come to you!" Would you join me in sending a written greeting as a church-together?

Iris Haake
20508 Enterprise Valley Dr.
Lewiston, MN 55952

Ila Musser
232 S. Fremont Street
Lewiston, MN 55952

Dick Schultz
9 Williams Street
Lewiston, MN 55952

Renata Rislow
Bremmer Suites Good Shepherd
803 Home St.
Apt. # 108 or PO Box 747
Rushford, MN 55971

Celebrating the Church Family of St. Paul's!



Anniversaries: Lori & Randall Reps (11th); Dianne & Jack Rislow (19th)

Birthdays: Sarah M Sommer (7th); Elliana Nelson (8th); Melissa Meisch (12th); Kennedy Mueller (13th); Amy Eggert (15th); Dennis Hovelson (16th); Angela Eggert (17th); Morgan Miller (17th); Bode Rislow (17th); Mike Burfiend (18th); Zane Nelson (23rd); Dianne Rislow (24th); Parker Peters (27th); Carol Boynton (29th).

Prayers for those needing strength:

Bobbi Jo Jensen: cancer treatment
Renata Rislow: recovering from a fall
Garrett Meisch: deployed to Africa
Iris Haake: healing after hospitalization
Don Groth: (Pastor Tami's dad) surgical recovery
Families of loved ones who will be missed during these coming holidays.

Lord, I bring to You my burdens and You know my situation. You know I can't make it without You. Comfort my heart, give me strength, & help me carry on. Amen!

If you want to add to this Prayer List, please inform the church office at 523-2643 or email

If you cannot find the church service on the St. Paul's website, please check YouTube as this is where the service is downloaded first before going on to the website. Once in YouTube, search as follows: *month/day/year, St. Paul's Church, Lewiston, MN*. This should get you to the service or within a few clips. Sometimes the day gets away from me before I get to posting it on the website. But it will always be on YouTube.



November Minutes of the St. Paul's Church Council Meeting – Nov. 9th, 2023

Opening prayer was made by Pastor Tami.

Those present : Pastor Tami, John Botten, Leann Jacobson, Jim Olson, Jeff Nelson, Diane Rislow, and Sarah Sommer.

The secretaries report was approved, a motion and seconded by Diane and Leann.

The treasurers report was approved motion and seconded by Sarah and Jim.

We are running about \$2000 a month shy of our giving to continue keeping our church up and running.

The mutual ministry : meeting is set for the Sunday November 19th after coffee fellowship.

The worship committee report : There will be a meeting on November 13.

Property management: Will continue to look into the repairs that need to be done to the church, with the winter weather.

Stewardship committee: no report.

Parish education: Are looking into another no rehearsal Christmas play .

Spy: Are having a couple fundraisers of coffee fellowship for the summer mission trip. One on November 19th and December 17th

Outreach and evangelism: no report.

Pastor report was given.

Congregational life:

Old business: Call committee is forming.

We are also looking for council members , nominations at our Annual meeting in January. Prayerful consideration of all members to serve on the council. It is a great way to serve our church and get to know other church members.

New Business: St. Paul's has been granted by the Fisher Foundation a grant for some of the repairs on the church.

This money can only be used for the church property, so we will be getting new blacktop in the back parking lot. New railing in the front of the church and repairing the roof and the drywall. There are bids that are still coming in for the repairs. We have been blessed by the team of people who worked on obtaining this for our church.

Next church council meeting will be December 12th at 6:30.

Pastor Tami did our closing prayer.

Meeting adjourned was made and seconded by Leann and Jeff.

Respectfully submitted

Sarah Sommer



New daily devotions are now in the turn-a-bout literature rack located in the narthex. In a world that seems to be spiraling out of control, we need to prepare for what comes. These daily devotions may be the thing to read when peace seems far away; when truth is wishful; and good news is a fleeting. Pick one up for yourself or a friend who could use some help in finding the answers.

Do you have favorite Christmas carols or traditional hymns?

St. Paul's would like to include those favorites in upcoming services. We are asking you to put them on the yellow request sheet found on the narthex table between now and mid December. Or you can email them or call the church with your list. stpaullewiston@gmail.com or 523-2643.



Dressing up the Church!

Greeting visitors is an important part when strangers come to church or people looking for a church home. Another important part is how the church looks. By that we mean paraments and banners and flowers.

The Altar Guild is looking for volunteers to help set up communion on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month, and also change banners and paraments when needed. If you would like to take a month and be trained in the communion set-up and change of banners, please let us know by signing up on the Altar Guild sign-up sheet for the desired month. It's an easy job and is much appreciated by others. We'd love to have your help. So think about what works for you....

December: Advent & Christmas

January: Lord's Baptism & Epiphany

February: Ash Wednesday is the 14th—the beginning of Lent

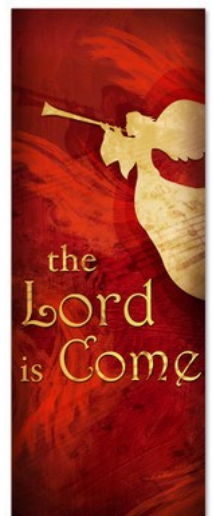
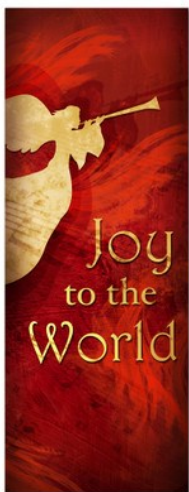
If interested, put your name on the sheet in narthex or contact:

Dianne Risløw: 507-696-4520;

Judy Hovelson: 507-450-6132

Beth Olson: 507-251-8857

Mary Botten: 507-523-3777





Join us for Worship this December!

9:00 am worship. 10:00 am coffee fellowship

December 3rd Praise Worship with Holy Communion Advent 2

December 10th Worship (no communion) Advent 3

December 17th Worship with Holy communion, Advent 4 Sunday School No Rehearsal Christmas Program

December 24th No worship at 9 am. 4:00 pm Christmas Eve service with Holy Communion.

December 31st Worship with Lessons and Carols (Christmas 1)

Advent Worship 2023

Advent continues through to our Christmas celebration worship service at 4 pm on Sunday December 24th. Our theme for the coming weeks will be "Bless the Advent we actually have" with blessings and other resources from Kate Bowler and the Everything Happens Project. You can download your own free devotional with this theme at:

<https://courses.katebowler.com/courses/advent-devotional/> or you can contact Pastor Tami at St. Paul's to have one printed for you.

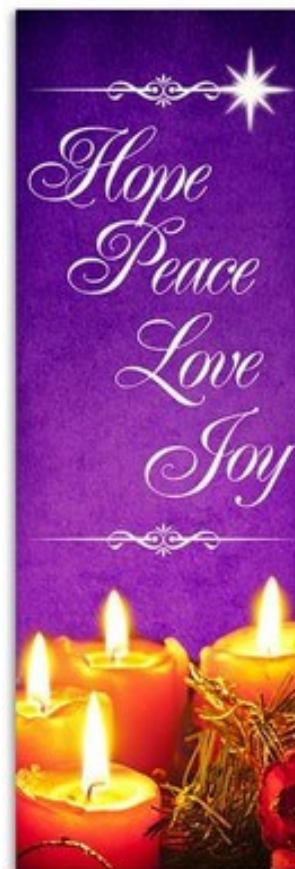
What Is Advent?

Advent means "arrival" and signifies the start of an event or the arrival of a person. Advent is a season in the Church calendar dedicated to the hopeful anticipation for the arrival or "advent" of Jesus of Nazareth. During the four-week period leading up to Christmas, many Advent observers engage in prayer, meditation, and Scripture study that emphasizes hope, peace, love, and joy. Christians from many backgrounds celebrate this time, and while their practices may look different, all focus on the hope-filled arrival of Jesus, the long-awaited Messiah and King.

The above is taken directly from: <https://bibleproject.com/guides/advent/> where you can read and watch more about Advent as well as many Bible topics.

Make Advent and Christmas more meaningful!

Beginning December 1st, read one chapter of the book of Luke each evening. Maybe before leaving the supper table with each family member taking turns reading. You could even include lighting an Advent wreath while reading. There are 24 chapters. On Christmas Eve you will have read an entire account of Jesus's life and wake up Christmas morning knowing WHO and WHY we celebrate. In a world that could use peace, hope, love and joy, Luke holds the answers.



FORMING ST PAUL'S CALL COMMITTEE:

The Call Committee's first meeting will be held on Wed., Dec. 6th at 7:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall.

You can learn more about this process at: <https://semnsynod.org/resources-for-congregations-and-leaders/call-process> If you wish to be part of this committee, **please let one of the council members know that you are interested in serving the church in this way. Thank you.**

Council Members as follows:

John Botten (507-421-1896) Sarah M. Sommer (523-3199) Jeff Nelson (507-951-2631) Leann Jacobson (507-421-5213) Josh Reps (507-450-8227) Jim Olson (507-421-8681) Diane Rislow (507-459-7263)

Secretary's Note

December is a busy month. In your life, my life, and the church's life. Name whatever it is, and it all comes down to the last day of the last month.

In December efforts are put forth to enhance the celebration of Advent, Christmas, and New Years. Extra practice goes into scheduled performances; fellowship that always involves fancy food; and the decorating. Now the Call Committee is meeting along with Church Council as they begin looking at the coming year's budget. And just for fun, let's add the possibility of ice and snow to complicate things.

My job here at St. Paul's enlists two main things: preparing service communications and maintaining financial support. But it's all the little things that keep things interesting. Closing out the month and year; creating new files for 2024 and moving 2023 records to another accessible spot. Taking inventory and ordering items. Meeting with staff to reflect on issues and projects of the year, and what's to come. Generating reports and preparing an annual report. It also is time to generate new lists for 2024 such as Counters, Ushers, and Acolyte. There are sign-up sheets for your convenience and I encourage you to take a look and become involved.

I enjoy this job, and yes, even the times when I pull my hair out. I certainly have enjoyed getting to know the members of St. Paul's, and continue to do so. You have been so kind to and forgiving of me as I evolved and learned the ropes.



May this month be a blessing to you and all you love. And pray that the New Year will ground us deeper into the one true faith in Christ Jesus.

Linda B



This Thanksgiving pumpkin was decorated with leaves listing all the different things our congregation was thankful for. Thanks to the ladies that set up this creative display. We have a lot to be thankful for. Here they are:

Aunts; friends; grandparents & grandchildren; warmth, food, sports; pets (dogs, cats, etc); orthodontist; children, spouse, life; life in Christ Jesus & forgiveness; power of prayer; new baby—Wren; Betty, Bob; pur Youth; family, friends and job; God; music, Kamea; a warm place to sleep!



Community Christmas Sharing Tree



Christmas is approaching, and the Lewiston Altura community is once again assisting in providing Christmas gifts for children and students in need in our area. Families sign up to have their children receive a gift, and people who would like to purchase a gift do the same. St. Paul's Church has committed to filling 15 children/student wishes. So, please feel free to take a tag from our Giving Tree and follow the directions!

There are 3 ways in which you can help with the LA Community Sharing Tree.

1 Take a tag from our tree

Sign below with your name and phone # so we know which number you have taken. This way we can notify you if we have questions. Wrap your gift and put the # on each gift. Drop off the gift(s) at St. Rose Hall on Sunday, December 10th between 12 noon and 4 pm. There will be someone there to receive them.

OR

2 Sign up online:

<https://sites.google.com/view/lasharingtree/home> After signing up for the number of children you would like to buy gifts for, you will receive an email telling you the age, sex, needs, and wants of the child/children. Wrap your gift and put the # on each gift. Drop off the gift(s) at St. Rose Hall on Sunday, December 10th between 12 noon and 4 pm. There will be someone there to receive them.

AND/OR

3 Donate money

Donate money in the container on the table in the back of the church and a group of us can do the shopping for you!

If you have any questions, please contact Judy Hovelson at 507-450-6132 or Dianne Rislow at 507-696-4520

YOU'RE INVITED TO THE S.P.Y.

"TASTE OF CHRISTMAS"
COFFEE FELLOWSHIP!



AFTER PRAISE WORSHIP
SUNDAY, DEC. 3RD!

We'll have Christmas cookies and
coffee waiting for you!

All profit helps our youth program.

Boy, are you in luck this month! S.P.Y. is having two fundraisers for their Mission Trip next July to St.Louis.

On Sunday, Dec, 3rd, they are making a large assortment of cookies and bars for you. And of course, coffee and other beverages.

If you miss that one, you'll get another chance.

On Sunday Dec. 17th, they will sponsor an Ice Cream Sundae Bar with all the toppings and of course:

Happy Birthday, Jesus!



Sunday, December 17th
at 10:00 am in the
Fellowship Hall.

Sponsored by SPY as a Fundraiser for their Mission Trip to St. Louis in July.

Get a scoop or two or three, add your favorite toppings, grab a cup of coffee and gab with your neighbor.

December 2023

Matthew narrates one of Jesus' controversial parables in which Jesus says that the reign of God is like that of a landowner who pays his workers the same wage no matter what time of day they began to work. When God changes God's mind about punishing Nineveh for their evil ways, Jonah is angry. Yet God is gracious and merciful, abounding in steadfast love. In baptism we receive the grace of God that is freely given to all. As Martin Luther wrote, in the presence of God's mercy we are all beggars.

Date	Counters	Ushers	Commun Asst.	Acolyte
3	Heather Reps	Volunteers	Volunteer	TBD
10	Leann Jacobson	Ann Lubinski & Dianne Rislow	X	TBD
17	Mary Botten	Dexter & Jeff Nelson	Melissa Nelson	TBD
24	Beth Olson	Volunteers	Volunteers	TBD
31	Heather Reps	Volunteers	X	TBD

AV: Jeff & Dexter Nelson

Altar Guild: Dianne Rislow

Monthly Budgeted Contributions: \$11,505

Total October Contributions: \$9,585 (-\$1,920)

Total November Contributions: \$9,079 (-\$2,426)

Dates for your calendar

Dec. 3rd Sun 9:00 am Praise Worship w/communion. 10:00 am S.P.Y. Fundraiser Coffee Fellowship

Dec. 6th Wed 6:30 pm Confirmation Class 7:00 pm Call Committee Meeting

Dec. 10th Sun 9:00 am Worship. 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship

Dec. 12th Tues 6:30 pm Church Council meeting

Dec. 13th Wed 6:30 pm S.P.Y. supper meeting

Dec. 17th Sun 9:00 am Worship w/communion. Sunday School Christmas Program.
10:00 am SPY Ice Cream Sundae Bar (fundraiser)

Dec. 20th Wed 6:30 pm Confirmation Class

Dec. 24th Sun No morning service. 4:00 pm Christmas Eve Service w/communion

Dec. 26th Tues Newsletter articles due!

Dec. 31st Sun 9:00 am Lessons & Carols Service

December meeting to be determined. Watch for date and time in the bulletin announcements. The colors are blue / white. To donate flowers, please contact Dianne Rislow 507-696-4520.



This is the season for fresh baked goodies and a few standards that are part of our heritage. Looks pretty good to me. Keep it in mind on December 8th. If you can't get there, send a friend with your list and when they return, you can all enjoy it together. That's just as much the season, too. (We should do that more often).

**2023 – 33rd Annual
HOLIDAY BAKE SALE**
10:00 am – 4:00 pm (or gone)
Sterling Drug Lobby, Rushford
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8th

Lefse -- Flatbread
Sweet Soup – Rommegrot
Norwegian Baking



Decorated Christmas
& Holiday Cookies
**Plus other goodies

We are also taking **PRE-ORDERS** for
**Rommegrot, Sweet Soup,
Krumkaka, Rosettes, and Sandbakkelsers**
ORDERS CAN BE PLACED BY calling: 507.875.2339
by Friday, December 1st.
Orders will be available for
PICKUP on Thursday, December 7th
from 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm
at North Prairie Lutheran Church
35957 State Hwy 30, Lanesboro, MN



Christmas

WORD SEARCH

I I J L L S D Y R J E I P J J C C V I P
 W M V G K N S A V C M R L Z O A A B V J
 G R H O G S X D T T D Z C K L K R O D J
 B I A Q W L W I C H X K D P L R O I N I
 V R I P R X W L T T X N R I Y X L J Q N
 O S Q E P D O O M W R E A T H Q E E K G
 F T B N E I C H R I S T M A S T R E E L
 N G O Q A N N Q L E E X E D J N S O Y E
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 W J E C D K R T N S Z I R E E D N I E R
 O M R A H N I V H T M G U Y N D W A V M
 J V I C O O A W P D S N W D O S K Q C S
 U T F R N O B L D N O R T H P O L E A S
 H L S S F L G M R K L U T H Z B L N Y E
 C O B S G E F G U A M W D X Y D T L U D
 W O B H B A K B H D G Z O H T A I F K L

JINGLE BELLS

BOW

CANDY CANE

CAROLERS

CHRISTMAS TREE

DECORATIONS

ELVES

FIREPLACE

GARLAND

GINGERBREAD

HOLIDAY

JOLLY

SANTA

MISTLETOE

NORTH POLE

ORNAMENTS

PRESENTS

REINDEER

SNOWMAN

WREATH

WRAPPING PAPER

