



The Monthly Epistle

of St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Volume 70, Issue 12 • December 2024

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas.

Last Christmas Eve, we started a tradition of Gemütlichkeit. We created an atmosphere of warmth and good cheer by serving hot, mulled cider and Luther-sealed ginger snap cookies during our Christmas Eve worship. Everyone was sent home with their mug.

This year, over 200 mugs have been hand-thrown, assembled, glazed, and fired by Connie Christman. We will enjoy the same Christmas Eve celebration this year and each worshiper will go home with one of her beautiful handmade mugs. They are even signed by Connie and dated on the bottom.

To make the event even better, Lisa Lord's Culinary Arts class at Faith Academy is helping Helen Gordon and her crew make the ginger snap cookies.

So, spread the word, and bring your family and neighbors to our candlelight service at 7:00pm.



Make a Joyful Noise for Christmas

The Outreach Committee is sponsoring a **Christmas Caroling** event on **Sunday, December 1st**, after church. We will **leave the church by 1:00pm** to go to Autumn Care on Bringle Ferry Road to “Deck the Halls” before Pastor Ryman leads the worship service. We hope to help residents get to the worship service too. Then those who don’t stay for the service can go to Piedmont Health and Rehab at 610 Fisher Street in Salisbury. We would **love to have families go** along. Children help put a smile on the resident’s faces.

We also **need to have choir members involved** to help us sound better. Please consider this outreach ministry to make the day special for the residents.

Contact Susan Bernhardt at 704-637-0155 or email srbernhardt@carolina.rr.com.

Mid-week Advent Supper and Service

On Wednesdays—December 4th, 11th, and 18th—we will have a mid-week supper and Advent service. Supper begins at **6pm**, followed by a short service in the sanctuary. In order to help us plan, please let us know if you will be attending the supper by putting “A” by your name in the friendship register.

Friendship Club

The St. Paul’s Friendship Club will meet **December 19th at 10:30am** in the Fellowship Hall for a Christmas music presentation by the *Y Wonders* choral group. A covered dish meal will be served after the presentation.

This meeting, the Friendship Club will provide the meat, bread, and beverages. Please bring your favorite side or dessert for all to enjoy. If you care to, **please provide extra since we will be serving our guests.** Everyone is invited. Hope to see you on December 19th.

2025 Yearbook

The **deadline for all information** for the **2025 yearbook** is **January 15, 2025**. This includes reports, lists of committee members, chairpersons, readers, acolytes, crucifers, etc. We will be publishing the yearbook on January 31, 2025. Information not turned in by the deadline, will not be in the yearbook.

Decorating the Church for Advent

The Christmas tree and other decorations will be placed on **Saturday, December 7**, at 9am. We need volunteers to assist in decorating for the Advent Season. Contact Bonnie Hinson if you would like to help— 704-279-3126 or lwaynehinson@yahoo.com

Poinsettias

If you would like to purchase a poinsettia to be placed in the sanctuary for Christmas the cost is **\$14 each**. The **deadline** to order a poinsettia is **Sunday, December 8**. Order forms are on the table in the narthex. We ask that you take your poinsettias home with you after the Christmas Eve service, or within a few days following Christmas.

Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministers will enjoy a **Christmas luncheon** on Saturday, **December 7th**. Ministers are asked to meet at China Grove Family House Restaurant in China Grove at **Noon**.

Lutheran Women's Meetings in December

Bonnie Bost – December 3, 7pm to decorate tree
Ellen Bumgarner – December 4, 11:30am for lunch
Kathy Ketchie – December 8, 4pm
Hama Lingle – December 2, 7pm
Melissa Lura – December 9, 6pm Christmas gathering
Grace Ridenhour – December 3, 5pm at Cracker Barrel

Thank You

Thank you to everyone for their thoughts, prayers, cards and hugs during my recent surgery and recovery. A special thanks to Pastor Ryman and Jennifer Aldridge for their visit with me at Baptist Hospital. The love and support of our church family means so much to Bonnie and me. You all are truly a blessing to us both.

Wayne Hinson

Thank you so much for the memorial gifts, calls, food, hugs, and mostly the prayers after the passing of our loving wife, mother, and sister—Teresa Casper Peeler. Please continue to keep us in your prayers. God bless you all.

Eddie Peeler

April and Kristina Abernethy

Linda Miller

Thank you for a great turnout Monday, November 11. We performed 34 procedures and collected 37 blood products including 3 double red cells. This will help up to 102 local patients. For the year, your church has helped over 300 local patients. We really appreciate your partnership and hope to continue saving lives in our community together. It has been my pleasure to work with you and your donors. Thank you!

Amanda Downing

OneBlood Representative

Congratulations to our newest members to be received through baptism in December.

Cleo Maeve Anzur, daughter of Melanie and Aaron Anzur

Baptized December 1, 2024

Brayden Eric Harper, son of Jeremy Harper

Baptized December 8, 2024

Walker Jefferson Smith, son of Hailey and Brandon Smith

Baptized December 22, 2024

Turkey Cookers Needed

Again this year volunteers are doing a Christmas Meal for the Communities in Schools students and families on December 12th at First Presbyterian Church in Salisbury. Since we help out Koontz Elementary School, **we have been asked to cook turkeys.** Frozen turkeys will be delivered to St. Paul's on Friday, December 6th. I will place them in the picnic shelter refrigerator and have aluminum pans for you to take. Use the pan to bring back the sliced turkey.

After you cook and slice the turkeys, please return them to the same refrigerator **by Thursday, December 12th at 1:00.** If you can cook a turkey, please let Susan Bernhardt know at 704-637-0155 or srbernhardt@carolina.rr.com Thanks so much for considering this event to help others.

Lutheran Military Veterans and Families Ministries

On Saturday, December 7, 4:00pm–6:00pm, we will have a ham and bean soup supper in the fellowship hall. Cornbread and drinks will also be served. Donations from the supper will benefit the ministry of Lutheran Military Veterans and Family Ministries.

On Sunday, December 8, Rev. Leslie Haynes and Patrick Dooley (Wyclif's dad) , will join us for worship and share a message about their ministry, centered in the lessons for the Second Sunday in Advent.

O Lord, by your indwelling Spirit
knit me together into worship
and beauty and holiness.

Lord, touch my body and spirit
till both are one with you. Amen

(Oswald Chambers 1874-1917)

December Calendar of Events

Sundays

- Sunday School, 9:30am; Worship, 10:30am
- Men's Choir practices each week at 4pm
- Handbell practice each week at 5pm
- Vespers at the Parsonage—fellowship, 6pm; prayer, 6:30pm
- December 1 – Breakfast before Sunday School, 8:30am
- December 1 – Baptism of Cleo Maeve Anzur, 10:30am
- December 1 – Installation of Pastor Brian Lord
- December 1 – Outreach Committee lunch, 12pm
- December 1 – Caroling at Autumn Care, 1pm
- December 1 – Autumn Care worship service, 2pm
- December 1 – Youth & Family Committee, 2pm
- December 8 – LMVFM representatives, and Patrick Dooley, will be with us for worship.
- December 8 – Baptism of Brayden Eric Harper, 10:30am
- December 8 – Christian Education Committee, 1:30pm
- December 8 – Worship & Music Committee, 2:30pm
- December 8 – Kathy Ketchie circle, 4pm
- December 15 – Installation of 2025 Church Council
- December 15 – Autumn Care worship service, 2pm
- December 15 – Children's Christmas play, 4pm
- December 22 – Baptism of Walker Jefferson Smith, 10:30am

Mondays

- Newsletter articles for January are **due before December 18**
- December 2 – Facility Accessibility Committee, 6:30pm
- December 2 – Hama Lingle Circle, 7pm
- December 9 – Melissa Lura Circle, 6pm
- December 9 – Finance Committee meeting, 6:30pm
- December 16 – Council meeting, 6:30pm
- December 23 – Lutheran Men's meeting, 6:30pm

Tuesdays

- Bible Study classes, at 10am and 6pm
- Girl Scouts meet each week at 6:30pm
- December 3 – Grace Ridenhour Circle at Cracker Barrel, 5pm

- December 3 – Bonnie Bost Circle, decorate Christmas tree, 7pm
- December 17 – Staff meeting, 5pm
- December 24 – Christmas Eve Candlelight service, 7pm

Wednesdays

- Classical Conversations group, 4th and 11th, 8:30-3:30
- Adult Choir practice each Wednesday at 6:30pm
- Youth Confirmation Class, conference room each week, 7pm
- December 4 – Ellen Bumgarner Circle meet for lunch, 11:30am
- December 4 – Mid-week supper and service, 6pm
- December 11 – Autumn Care chapel service, 2pm
- December 11 – Mid-week supper and service, 6pm
- December 18 – Mid-week supper and service, 6pm
- December 25 – Have a blessed Christmas Day; the church office will be closed for Christmas on Wednesday and

Thursdays

- December 19 – Friendship Club, 10:30am; with special guests, the Y Wonders choral group

Saturdays

- December 7 – Decorate for Christmas, 9am
- December 7 – Stephen's Ministry, China Grove Family House restaurant for lunch, 12pm
- December 7 – Soup/Cornbread supper, 4pm, to benefit Lutheran Military Veterans and Families Ministry

A child will be born
 who will be named
 Wonderful Counselor,
 Mighty God,
 Everlasting Father,
 and Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6

Unto Us

Find the 28 bold words from Isaiah 9:2, 6–7.

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

The people who **walked** in **darkness** have **seen** a **great light**.
Light has **shone** on the inhabitants of a land of deep darkness....
For to us a **child** is **born**, to us a **son** is **given**. And **sovereignty**
shall be upon his **shoulder**; and his **name** shall be called
Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace. There shall be no end to the increase of his
dominion and of peace—on the **throne** of **David** and on his
kingdom—to establish it and to uphold it with **justice** and with
righteousness, **now** and **evermore**. The **zeal** of the LORD of hosts
will accomplish this.

Unscramble the verse:

Het trpsii of eth dlro alslh tesr noup imh.

Memorial Gifts

A gift was received in memory of **Nathan Raymer's birthday** from

Franda Raymer

A gift was received in memory of **Teresa Peeler** for the Carillon Fund from

Karen and Tim Deal

Gifts were received in memory of **Teresa Peeler** for the Capital Building Fund from

Cindy and Travis Alligood

Lori and Perry Bernhardt

Alice Davis

Susan and Mark Ryman

Jeanne and Tony Shaver

Johnsie and Wayne Taylor

A gift was received in memory of **Teresa Peeler** for the Cemetery Fund from

Irene Miller

Gifts were received in memory of **Herman Ritchie** for the General Fund from

Allen and Gina Burnett

Lottie Simpson

A gift was received in memory of **Evelyn Page** (aunt of Tammy Leazer), for the General fund from

Susan Cruz

A gift was received in memory of **Zada and John Stafford** for the General Fund from

Kim and Randy Echerd

A gift was received in memory of Jim Young for the Capital Building Fund from

Sue Young, Shane Young, Jim Young, Jr., and families

Honor Gifts

A gift was received in honor of **Karen and Tim Deal's wedding anniversary** for the Carillon fund from

Crystal and Dana Bost

A gift was received in honor of **Rylee Deal's 6th birthday** for the Carillon Fund from

Karen and Tim Deal

A gift was received in honor of **Sue Young's birthday** for the Capital Building Fund from

Jeanne and Tony Shaver

A gift was received in honor of **Theodore Powlas' 1st birthday** on November 12th, for the Capital Building Fund from

Mita Powlas

A gift was received in honor of **Johnsie and Wayne Taylor** for the General Fund from

Kim and Randy Echerd

November Blood Drive

The November Blood Drive at our church was a success. 36 donors registered to give, two were deferred, three gave “double red blood cells” so the total donated was 37 units. Although 10 persons who had scheduled appointments did not show, several walk-ins, most of who were first-time donors at our church, helped us reach our goal. Special thanks go to Lindsey Whisnant for being both our youngest donor and also a first time donor.

The total number of units collected in 2024 was 120 units. That means that over 300 persons needing blood transfusions can be helped. Our church has been a donation site for 31 years and during that time has collected over 3500 units of blood to help others.

What happens in 2025 depends on several issues. The church will stop using OneBlood for blood donations. I am trying to contact Red Cross to see if our church could be a donor site for their agency. All donors were asked if they would come back to donate if the church switched to Red Cross and only two questioned the change. All other donors indicated that changing was no problem with them. Information about blood drives in 2025 will be made available as soon as possible.

Alice Davis



Offering for October 2024

General Fund income for the month: \$35,196

November General Fund report will be in the January Epistle. Online Giving is accessible at StPaulsLutheran.Church/give. Scanning this QR code will take you directly to the giving page. There is a minimal fee for each transaction.



Installations

Brian Lord will be installed as Pastor during our December 1st worship service. Please come and support him and the family that Sunday, on which he will also be preaching, and his family lighting the first Advent candle.

On the 15th, our new Council members will be installed. Please be present as we install Susan Faggart, Matt Holland, Donna Lyerly, Mita Powlas, Bethany Whisnant, and Luke Ziegler as our congregation's new Council members. They will begin their service in January of 2025.

Morning Prayer

Each weekday morning at 8:30, our secretary and pastors gather in the church office for morning prayer. Others also join us in praying the Daily Lectionary. This reading plan may be found on page 179 of the LBW where we are restarting the readings with Year One at the beginning of December.

We read the lessons together, including a fourth reading from *For All the Saints*, a four-volume set of prayer books that some of us use at Vespers and Morning Prayer. We also discuss these readings, share what's happening at St. Paul's, then pray for each other and for our church.

We would welcome you any weekday morning from 8:30 to 9:00 in Pams' office. Join us for prayer; it is a rich time that you will enjoy. Our hope is that we quickly outgrow the confines of her office and move Morning Prayer to the chapel.

Martin Luther on Christmas

Christ has always been the Life and Light, even before his birth, from the beginning, and will ever remain so to the end. He shines at all times in all creatures, in the holy Scriptures, through his saints, prophets, and ministers, in his Word and works; and he has never ceased to shine. But in whatever place he has shone, there was great darkness, and the darkness apprehended him not.

Missions

Blessings upon you. Your supportive interest in the work of Focus on the Family means more than we can possibly put into words. Thank you for your gracious \$275.73 donation. We appreciate you!

Sincerely,
Jim Daly, President

Thank you for your latest generous offering in support of our ministry. You have enabled an abundance of delightful engagements, interactions, relationships, and resources to take place in just the past few months. Your fellowship makes our joy as complete as it can be this side of the resurrection. God bless your Gospel-motivated voice for life!

In truth and love,
Pastor Michael Salemink
Executive Director,
Lutherans for Life

Thank you for the donation of \$275.73. We appreciate your continued support. Your contribution has made such a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve. Thank you for your kindness and generosity.

Linda Austin, Director,
Organ Lutheran Church
Pantry/Outreach Program

Thank you for your generous donations of \$275.73 in October, and \$273.04 in November. Through your support of Radical, we can see the nations reached for the glory of Jesus' name together. We are grateful to God for you.

The Radical Team

Missions

Thank you for your gifts of \$273.04 in November, and \$275.73 in October to the ministry of Samaritan's Purse. Our teams are working from six sites to help clean up downed trees, waterlogged debris, and flooded homes [from hurricane Helene.] Your partnership means so much as we work in over 110 nations and look for every opportunity to share the hope that only comes from a relationship with God through his Son, Jesus Christ.

Sincerely,
Franklin Graham, President
Samaritan's Purse

On behalf of the staff and Board of Sola Publishing, thank you for your gifts of \$420.06 and \$393.91. You have blessed our hearts with your support of our ministry to provide solid, biblical resources for use in preaching and teaching God's word. Because of your gifts, we are able to keep the cost of our materials low for those churches struggling to keep their ministries viable. We are deeply thankful for your gracious gifts.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Steven King,
Managing Editor

Thank you for your \$294.04 and \$275.73 gifts and continued support of Spiritual Orphans Network. It makes a profound difference in the lives of God's people all over the world.

In His Service,
Pastor David Breidenbach
SON Executive Director

From Faith to Faith

Find the 31 bold words from Romans 1:11–17.

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

For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some **spiritual gift** to **establish** you—that is, that we may be encouraged through each other’s faith, both yours and mine. But I do not want you to be **unaware**, brothers, that often I **intended** to come to you (and have been **hindered** so far) so that I might have some **fruit** in you also, as well as in the rest of the **Gentiles**. I am **obligated** to both **Greeks** and **foreigners**, both to the **wise** and **foolish**. So, as for me, I am **eager** to **preach** the **gospel** to you also who are in **Rome**. For I am **not ashamed** of the gospel, for it is the **power** of **God** for **salvation** to **all** who **believe**—to the **Jew** first, but also to the **Greek**. For in it is **revealed** a righteousness of God from **faith** to **faith**, as it is written, “But the righteous shall **live** by **faith**.”



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC)

A family of faith sharing the gospel and love of Christ

Phone: 704-633-0922

Website: StPaulsLutheran.Church

Facebook: www.facebook.com/StPaulsLCMC

OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Thursday 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Friday 8:30 a.m. – 12 Noon

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St. Paul's newsletter, the "Monthly Epistle," is intended to keep everyone informed about happenings within the congregation that effect and contribute to our ministry together. In order to maximize reach and minimize cost, the preferred methods of distribution are by email, and posting on our St. Paul's website (www.StPaulsLutheran.Church). All members are encouraged to use the newsletter as a resource to help you consider how God is calling you to be involved in the life of his church. If you are unable to access the newsletter online, or would just like to have a printed copy to refer to, the most cost-effective way to receive it is to pick up a copy from the narthex or church office. We mail copies to those members whom we know don't have online access, are shut-in, or live out of town. If you want to be added to our mailing or email list, please contact the church office.