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Church Office Hours:

Monday – Friday

8:00 am – 12:00 pm

Sunday Schedule:

Sunday School: 8:30 am

Worship: 9:30 am

Pastor Wonnacott:

Office Hours:

M, W, TH & F

8:00 – 11:30 am

From Pastor Wonnacott's keyboard:

The Church Year begins with Advent (from Latin *adventus*, which means “coming into”), a four-week period of preparation before Christmas. The story of Jesus during Advent is the story of hope coming into the world. When the time was just right, God sent His Son, Jesus, into the world. The Advent season teaches us to prepare to receive our Savior, Jesus.

In Advent, we wait for our coming King. Read Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; 11:1-2, Micah 5:2, Matthew 1:18-25, Luke 1:26-38, 46-55.

Advent Practices and Traditions

The color for Advent is violet which is a symbol of our repentance in preparation for our coming King. We do not sing the Gloria in Excelsis in the service during Advent. This is the angels' song at Christmas, so during Advent we pass over this traditional Hymn of Praise in silent anticipation.

It has become common to use an Advent wreath to mark the season. This wreath has four candles – one for each week in Advent. As these candles are lit each week, our anticipation mounts as we look forward to Jesus' coming.

We gather for midweek services. These services heighten our awareness and anticipation for the celebration of Christ's coming in the flesh!

Christmas is the fulfillment of the Word!

On Christmas Eve we hear the story of Jesus as the long-awaited King who has finally come to save us. Jesus, God's Son, the King of heaven and earth, is born in Bethlehem – the Son of God is the Baby lying in a manger.

The evening service of Christmas Eve marks the beginning of the Church's celebration of the Nativity of Our Lord. The season continues after December 25th over a period traditionally known as the twelve days of Christmas.

At Christmas, we worship our God made flesh. Read Luke 2:1-24, John 1:1-18, Galatians 4:4-5.
A Blessed Advent and Merry Christmas to All!!!

THE DEADLINE FOR THE JANUARY EPISTLE IS DECEMBER 20TH!!! Epistle articles, comments, ideas may be deposited in the epistle box in the Narthex mail slots or e-mailed to Eric Thornton at firemanet@yahoo.com. I appreciate all of your articles, ideas and comments!

Board Briefs:

YOUTH BOARD NEWS and NOTES

- Please join us for the Christmas Eve service at 7:00 pm on December 24th as the Youth of our congregation will help share the Christmas Gospel through a new to us play titled "Christmas by the Book," which allows us to walk through this wonderful and life-saving message with direct quotations from Scripture. We look forward to seeing everyone there as we celebrate together the Christ Child's birth.

If there are any questions related to the Youth Group, please contact Andy Wildauer at (801) 707-3399.

INFORMATION ON CALL COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

The Call Committee for a new Administrative Pastor at St Paul's is presently "On Hold" until the completion of the Revitalization Program that was approved by voters for proceeding with Indiana District offices. This program may result in revisions to our priorities in searching for the Administrative Pastor. The Epistle previously contained a description of the Revitalization Program, which basically will help us understand who we are, where we're going and how do we want to get there. Parish Planning Council members are presently finishing up compiling the information requested by Indiana District to proceed with the program.

Please keep the Call Committee and Parish Planning Council in your prayers.

Extra Opportunities to Worship the Lord

Advent Midweek-Christmas Series—

Angels: The Ultimate Divine Messengers of Hope

Advent Midweek 1

November 30th, 2022

Sermon: "The Angel Gabriel Brings a Message of Hope in the Midst of Unbelieving Doubt"

Text: *Luke 1:5–25*

Advent Midweek 2

December 7th, 2022

Sermon: "An Angel of the Lord Brings a Message of Hope in the Midst of Fear of the Unknown"

Text: *Matthew 1:18–25*

Advent Midweek 3

December 14th, 2022

Sermon: "The Angel Gabriel Brings a Message of Hope in the Midst of the Seemingly Impossible"

Text: *Luke 1:26–38*

Children's Christmas Service

December 21st, 2022

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

December 24th, 2022

Sermon: “A Multitude of the Heavenly Host Announces a Peace Which Brings Renewed Hope”

Text: *Luke 2:13–14*

Christmas Day

December 25th, 2022

Sermon: “An Angel Brings Hope with a Sign of God’s Presence in the Newly Born Christ Child”

Text: *Luke 2:8–11*

Everyone is invited to come and worship with us!

Also, we will be having **Midweek Advent dinners** on November 30th, December 7th, and December 14th at **6pm**. Our Wednesday night dinners and services are great opportunities to invite a family member or friend, or to remind a member that you have not seen for a while. May God continue to bless us with opportunities to gather!

Ushers: It is very important that you find your own replacement if you are not going to be able to usher during your assigned time. Please take the time to do this so that we always have ushers available to assist our members and visitors. Thank you.

LCMS Stewardship Ministry – lcms.org/stewardship Newsletter Article – December 2022

Anxiety vs. Trust

Jesus, in His Sermon on the Mount, teaches those who follow Him that worrying about the necessities of life is idolatry: worshipping a false god. Worry and anxiety show what we care about. Our anxiety reveals what we love and what we’re devoted to. It reveals what we trust in.

This is why our Lord begins this section with an overarching principle: “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money” (Matt. 6:24).

But you say: “I must eat and drink. I must have clothing to wear and have a home in which to dwell.” Yes, all these things you need. And Jesus says that your Father in heaven will ensure that you have them. He demonstrates this with a simple argument: your Father in heaven feeds the birds of the air, who neither sow, nor reap, nor gather into barns. He clothes the lilies of the field, who neither toil nor spin but are arrayed more luxuriously than Solomon in all his glory. If, then, your Father in heaven feeds the birds, if He clothes the lilies, how will He not also feed and clothe you, when you are worth more than they are? (Matt 6:25–33).

Do you know that you are worth more than them? You are worth infinitely more. You are worth the price of the eternal Son of God. Did the Son of God come down from heaven and become a lily? Did he descend and take on the form of a bird? No! He came down from heaven and became a man: flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone (Gen. 2:23). He is one of us, our brother. And what did He do when He became flesh to dwell among us? He gave His holy, precious blood, through His innocent suffering and death, that you might be His own and live under Him in His kingdom forever.

God became man in Christ Jesus. He lived the life we failed to live, and He died the death we deserved. He was raised again on the third day overcoming sin and death ... for us. He was crucified for our transgressions and raised for our justification. So, if your Father in heaven has given His Son to die for us in order that we might live with Him eternally, how will He not also give us all things to support this body and life?

To be anxious about the necessities of life, to devote yourself to food and clothing, to care about these things and find security in them, is to serve another god. It is to deny that you will live forever because Jesus, the Son of God, is risen from the dead and lives and reigns for all eternity. It is to believe that the God who created you, redeemed you by the death and

resurrection of His Son and sanctified you by His Spirit, will not keep His promise to sustain you in this life.

Jesus says, “Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness” (Matt. 6:33). God’s kingdom is His rule among us. His rule among us comes when our Father in heaven gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His Holy Word and lead godly lives here in time and there in eternity. This is what we ask God to do for us in the prayer that Jesus taught us.

Your Father in heaven knows what you need — food and clothing, house and home — and He promises to give it to you. Chief of the things you need is His grace and mercy in His Son, Jesus Christ. So, seek after that. And those who seek will find. And all the necessities of life, our Lord says, will be added to you.

This is the 3rd in a series of articles outlining the duties and responsibilities of the various St. Paul's boards. This month we look at Christian Education:

- 1) To plan and administer educational programs of the congregation (with the exception of the Day School and Pre School)
- 2) To provide for the policies, personnel, facilities and necessary means to support Christian educational opportunities.

A Church Membership — What Does This Mean?

You may be a member of a number of different organizations — booster club, gym, credit union, community group, zoo, wholesale club, fraternity, sorority, this committee, that board — the list is potentially endless. Memberships generally require some commitment to the organization from the member. The level of commitment varies. It may be a simple gentlemen's agreement. It may be a onetime fee. It may be a renewable annual fee. Many of us maintain these memberships because we receive some benefit from the organization. We purchase at a discount. We use their facilities. We find friendships in common interests.

A church membership is different. The church membership functions as a body. *For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ... Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. (1 Cor 12:12, 27)*

The church supports its members to live and grow in a healthy life of faith. Individuals become members through, baptism and/or confirmation. Baptized Members are not old enough to fully comprehend a life of faith and are nurtured by the church to achieve that purpose. Confirmed Members have publicly *confirmed* their faith. The church *affirms* this confirmation and agrees to give oversight to their discipleship. These members' activities maintain and grow the church. They enable it to do the work of nurturing and making disciples and expanding God's kingdom on earth.

What does my role look like? Our individual roles are rarely ours alone. We are a part of the body.

The church holds regular worship services. The worship of our LORD is a precious privilege. Our presence during worship strengthens not only ourselves, but also our fellow members. We should attend worship regularly for restoration and growth.

The church offers the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. This is a priceless gift from God. It assures the repentant heart of divine forgiveness. It strengthens our faith. Through visible elements, we receive invisible blessings-including *Communion* with our Lord. Christ did not say how often to commune, but He did say *often*

We are to be diligent in prayer, personal and communal. We are to pray for ourself, our family, our fellowmen. Pray for the Church—its pastors and teachers. Pray for the Kingdom of God at home and in every place. Pray for the community, for the nation, for peace in the world. AS St. Paul says, “Pray without ceasing.”

We are to serve the LORD in the church! There are many different ways to utilize our unique, God given gifts for service within the church. (Seek and you shall find!) Maintaining operations, maintaining facilities, teaching, learning, public relations, cooking, and *so many others* are ways to

serve. Work for the Church! Learn! Tell! Witness!

We are also to serve the LORD in our community. The Lord said “Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” Be “hearers” - and be “doers.” We are to put our faith into action— showing love for our neighbor. He is a light!

We are all God's stewards. We own nothing. Actually, we owe. We owe everything! Our love for God, and thankfulness for His bountiful blessings, prompts us to regular, cheerful, generous giving. The church’s role is to guide and grow its own members and the kingdom of God throughout the world.

Our service and gifts are utilized within our own building and community. They are also utilized in neighboring communities, distant communities, and distant lands.

Church membership is important indeed. It is participation in the business of the Heavenly Father. Church membership involves a real profession of faith—a personal relationship with Christ the crucified, risen, living Savior. The Church member is enlisted in the glorious and essential task of building the Kingdom of God. He deals with the welfare of people—welfare of body and soul...for time and eternity.

This is what church membership means! What does YOUR church membership mean?

Let’s Join Together in Prayer

They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread **and to prayer**. Acts 2:42

Have you ever struggled to be disciplined in prayer? Have you ever wondered how God would use your faithfulness in prayer to change things? To change us?

Concordia Publishing House offers a great little resource called, Lutheran Book of Prayer. Currently being printed in its 5th edition, it can be a wonderful tool for personal devotions and

for congregational unity. This text is a smaller volume of prayers for every occasion: prayers for the festivals and seasons of the church, prayers for our nation, world and community, prayers for the sick and prayers for ourselves. It also offers guidance in preparation for confession, worship and communion.

The highlight of this book, however, is a guide for 28 days of morning and evening prayer. These prayers can stand alone or be a starting point for your personal times of prayer. The prayers focus on praising and thanking God for the gifts He so richly bestows, seeking and receiving His forgiveness, and asking for His empowering Spirit in the work of the church.

The Board of Christian Education is making this resource available to all interested members of the congregation during the month of December. It is our hope and prayer that we could join together as a congregation in 28 days of morning and evening prayer beginning January 1, 2023.

Books will be available in the Narthex in the coming weeks. (Suggested donation \$15)

Postings from Preschool

We were very thankful for the many learning opportunities offered to us in November. We practiced a fire drill again, ran an obstacle course in the gym, and made Stone Soup which we enjoyed with our families. Our Bible stories included David and Jonathan's friendship, David's kingly reign, Solomon's building of the temple, and God's care for Elijah. Along with many Thanksgiving projects and papers we studied the letters K, D, F, and O. We are also thankful to our preschool families who brought in many donations to fill 3 shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child. We're practicing a couple songs for the Children's Christmas service and we're looking forward to learning about the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. May the joy of Christmas remain with you throughout the year!

OUR OFFERINGS TO THE LORD FROM HIS BLESSINGS TO US

Offerings remind us of the blessings God has given us and are an opportunity to thank Him for what He has done in our lives. Please place your offerings in our Offering Box located in front of the water fountains in the narthex of the church. You may also choose “e-tithing” by having a weekly deposit to St Paul’s from your bank account. If you have questions on e-tithing, please contact the Church Office.

Amazon Smile Reminder

Attention Amazon shoppers: Choose Amazon Smile and designate St. Paul's as the charitable recipient on your account. Amazon will donate a percentage of your purchases to our church and school. Please note this doesn't cost you anything, but is a charitable donation made by Amazon. Thanks for supporting St. Paul's through this program.

SGO DONATIONS

Please don't forget to donate to St. Paul's SGO (Scholarship Granting Organization)! This last year we disbursed almost \$21,000 in scholarships to assist students with tuition in St. Paul's Lutheran School. This is a huge blessing to them and a way to minister to others!

Plus, donating to the SGO benefits you! Your donation will be given a 50% state tax credit as well as being eligible as a deductible.

For more information, contact Jennifer Harman at the school office (547-546-2790) or pick up a pamphlet from the tract rack in the narthex.

Mission of the Month

December Mission of the Month: AbleLight, formerly Bethesda Lutheran Communities

Bethesda officially changed its name to **AbleLight** but the mission remains the same -- to enhance the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities through services that share the good news of Jesus Christ.

Bethesda is dedicated to helping those they support become active members of their community so that they can live their lives to the fullest.

For more information, go to ablelight.org

PTL FUNDRAISING

We greatly appreciate everyone's continued support in our fundraisers!

Sunday School + Fall Quarter Offerings

Pre-K -Grade 2 Nazareth Room

This class will study the life and times of Jesus and its application for daily living. The class will meet in Mrs. Thornton's Preschool classroom and be taught by Wendy Coxey. 8:30-9:15 am.

Grades 3-5 School Classroom

We will pick up on our "Life in Christ" series as we study Old Testament History – the fall of Adam and Eve through the early years of Joseph – noting the plans and promises God has for His people. This class will be taught by Heidi Wildauer and will meet in the Day School. 8:30-9:15 am.



Middle School grades 6-8: Early Christians read God’s Word aloud together in community. Bring your Bibles and come ready to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest. Gather in gym Mezzanine 8:30 am.-9:15 am.

High School Jerusalem Room

Bill Rogers will continue with a video series discussing situations that effect today's teens and how Christians should respond according to God’s Word. The class will meet in the Jerusalem Room. 8:30-9:15 a.m.

Adult Bible Class

Terry Miller will continue leading the Bible study and discussion on the book of Daniel . . . meets in the Bethany Room, 8:30 am.-9:15 am.



Men’s Bible Study: Men (ages 18+) meet at the Bremen Community Hospital cafeteria to enjoy breakfast and fellowship while studying God’s Word and various topics. The group meets every other Wednesday, 6:30 am.-7:30 am.

We look forward to seeing you

The Board of Christian Education Thanks all of the teachers that have given of themselves to teach this last quarter.

"Together"

*"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."
Luke 2: 14 (NIV)*

An elder of a church in Iowa shared this story with me.

His young daughter was concentrating so hard on her grade-school homework that he got curious and asked her what she was doing. Without looking up, she said, "I'm writing a report on the condition of the world and how to bring peace."

Impressed, he respectfully asked, "Isn't that a pretty big job for a young lady, like you?"

"Nope," she answered, "I don't have to do it all myself. I'm working with two other people."

Christmas is just around the corner, and the greeting cards arriving in the mail talk about "peace on earth and good will toward men".

I wish peace could be brought about by Christmas cards or three Christian students who are working on the project.

Sadly, that's not the case, is it?

Wars, hatred, and injustice abound. Peace, nationally and personally, are illusive. What's the problem? Maybe it's because there aren't three working together.

Obviously, God works for peace. So the people of the world might be redeemed He sent His Son to save us. So, God is one Person working for peace. SOME people in this world, having seen the Savior's sacrifice, are also working for peace. That's one-and-a-half.

The problem is the devil, along with many people who are filled with hatred, jealousy, anger, and prejudice; they're on the side of war and conflict.

This is why, in part, true "PEACE" in this sinful world, will always be confined to the hearts, minds, and souls of those folks who have seen and believe on the Savior.

We shouldn't be surprised. That's what the angels of Bethlehem said would happen: "...on earth peace to men on whom His (God's) favor rests."



December

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays & Anniversaries

December 2022

ANNIVERSARIES

10	Larry & Beth Enders	28	Brad & Ada Sahlhoff
12	Anthony & Katherine Barts	31	Wayne & Tara Andrews Tony & Melonie Venable

BIRTHDAYS

1	Doug Aurand	18	Connor Barts
2	Penny Holderman Robb Jones Dorothy Sahlhoff	19	Jayden Potoczky Brittnay Sahlhoff Elaine Young
5	Sara Sahlhoff	20	Wyatt Wildauer
8	Karen Matthew	21	Emilano Mejia
10	Annette Knepper John Stayton	23	Dawn Schmeltz
13	Kandice Ernsperger Joe Ervin Christie Wonnacott Christina Wright	24	Traci Pullman
14	Grace Barts Noah Youngman	26	Katherine Goze Matthew Ringle
15	Tammy Britt Mark Cope	27	Patty Bowen Rhonda Owens Ethan Tjernagel
16	Anthony Barts Noelle Cannon Kelly Lee	28	Eric Miller
17	Steve Fox	29	Katie Lynch
		31	Larry Bitt Alexia Cannon Candice Wright

St. Paul's Lutheran Women's Missionary League

*As Lutheran Women in Mission, we joyfully proclaim Christ, support missions,
and equip women to honor God by serving others. Adopted 2021*

LWML Ingathering for FT. WAYNE SEMINARY

Items will be taken to the Seminary the first week of December.

Many thanks to the Eichingers!

**Dec. 7, Wednesday, 6:20-6:40 p.m., Bethany Room,
before the Advent service.**

Short informational meeting; finalize plans for "Cheer Boxes."

**Sunday, December 11: prepare "Cheer Boxes:" 3:15 p.m.,
in the Church kitchen, for delivery by our congregation's carolers.**

Baked goods appreciated: bring 1 1/2 - 2 dozen INDIVIDUALLY-WRAPPED items to
the Church kitchen on Sunday, December 11.

The past two years we have done 18 - 20 containers. Thank you in advance.

Psalm 100:2a "Serve the Lord with Gladness" LWML motto

St. Paul's 177th LITURGICAL YEAR † December 1, 2022 – December 31, 2022

Worship Opportunities To Bless Our Lives * Celebration Of Holy Communion

Sunday 9:30 a.m. Unless noted

Dec 4 22nd Sunday after Pentecost

Dec 11* 23rd Sunday after Pentecost

Dec 18 24th Sunday after Pentecost **LAST SUNDAY OF THE CHURCH YEAR**

Dec 24 Saturday 7:00 pm CHRISTMAS EVE Candle-light Service

Dec 25* SUNDAY CHRISTMAS DAY

Dec* 31 Saturday 7:00 pm Feast of Circumcision & Name Day of Jesus

*December Minor Festivals: 21 St. Thomas, Apostle • 26 St. Stephen, Church's First Martyr •
27 St. John, Evangelist & Apostle • 28 The Holy Innocents, Martyrs of Our Lord •*

Commemorations: 4 John of Damascus Theologian & Hymnwriter • 6 Nicholas of Myra Pastor
• 7 Ambrose of Milan Pastor & Hymnwriter c. 340-397 • 13 Lucia Martyr •
17 Daniel The Prophet & The Three Young Men • 19 Adam & Eve • 20 Katharina Von Bora Luther

IF YOU LOOK FOR ME AT CHRISTMAS

If you look for Me at Christmas, you won't need a special star;
I'm no longer just in Bethlehem, I'm right there where you
are.

You may not be aware of Me amid the celebrations.
You'll have to look beyond the stores and all the decorations.

But if you take a moment from your list of things to do,
and listen to your heart, you'll find I'm waiting there for you.

You're the one I want to be with, your the reason that I came.
And you'll find Me in the stillness, as I'm whispering your name.

author unknown

***“For there is born to you this day in the city of David a
Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” Luke 2:11***

The Chrismon Tree will be placed and adorned on Saturday, December 3. Also, the Church proper and narthex will have added decorations placed. Anyone wishing to help, grade 6 and up, is welcome to come for as long as they wish to stay, beginning at 9:00a.m. As always, the congregation is invited and encouraged to take a closer look at the symbols on the tree, before or after services; but altar guild requests you please not touch or handle the Chrismons. Most are over 50 years old, and fragile. Pictures are allowed.

