

# EPIS<sup>+</sup>LE



*St. Paul's Lutheran  
The Church On The Hill*

**Volume 68 No. 12**

**December - 2024**

## **Contact Information:**

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## **Pastor's Message**

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***Advent, waiting for the expected, at an unexpected time.***  
*"She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:21*

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The sun was low over Nazareth when I first saw Mary. My father arranged the betrothal, as was our custom, but I couldn't have imagined how deeply her presence would affect me. Mary's humility, her quiet strength—there was something about her that I couldn't explain, something that made me feel like I was standing on holy ground when I was near her. I vowed to honor her, to build a life worthy of her faith and trust.

But everything changed the day she came to me, her hands trembling as she spoke. She told me she was with child. At first, I couldn't believe it. My heart felt like it had been shattered. I was a righteous man, and I'd kept myself pure for the marriage. How could this have happened? Mary tried to explain, her eyes pleading, but her story seemed... impossible. She said an angel had visited her. She said the child was conceived by the Holy Spirit. I wrestled with these words deep into the night. I loved her, but the law was clear. If I exposed her, she would face humiliation—or worse. I decided to divorce her quietly, to spare her as much pain as I could. It was the only path I could see.

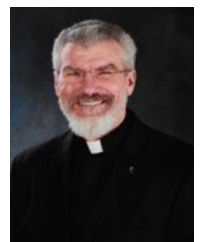
But then, as I lay on my bed that night, I had a dream—no, more than a dream. An angel appeared to me, bright and commanding, and his words pierced my doubt. "Joseph, son of David," he said, "do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." When I awoke, my heart burned with conviction. I knew what I had to do.

I took Mary as my wife, though people whispered behind our backs. I didn't care. My duty was clear. As the months passed, I marveled at her faith. She carried herself with such grace, even as her belly swelled and the journey we were about to take loomed before us.

The decree came from Caesar Augustus—a census. We had to travel to Bethlehem, my ancestral town. Mary was near the end of her pregnancy, and the journey was grueling. The roads were rough, and the nights were cold, but Mary never once complained. I did everything I could to protect her, praying silently to God for strength. When we finally reached Bethlehem, the streets were crowded with travelers. Every innkeeper shook his head, no room for us. Panic clawed at me as Mary's time drew near. At last, one man took pity on us and offered his stable. It wasn't much—a crude shelter with animals—but it was enough.

That night, under the glow of a star brighter than I'd ever seen, Mary gave birth. I held the child in my arms, his tiny face so perfect, so serene. Jesus. The Savior. In that moment, every doubt, and every fear melted away. God was with us.

Your servant in Christ Jesus,  
Pastor David Viles



**DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS**

- 1 Melissa Thompson
- 4 Kent Nelson
- 5 Steven Loki Dunlap
- 8 Bill Wyss
- 10 Thea Fischer
- 11 Miranda England
- 11 Ryan Linhardt
- 11 Madison Williams
- 12 Natalie Kalaf
- 12 Gage Ferrell
- 16 Elda Pistel
- 16 Leroy Plochberger
- 19 Adam Grunden
- 24 Mark Meller
- 25 Jana Thompson
- 25 Shawn Hillen
- 28 Larry Koestner
- 30 Julie Carel
- 31 Tony Miller

**FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Month/Day	Attendance Phys./Virtual	Offering
<b>NOVEMBER 03</b>	<b>85 / 188</b>	<b>\$ 3,119.25</b>
<b>NOVEMBER 10</b>	<b>66 / 174</b>	<b>\$ 2,898.62</b>
<b>NOVEMBER 17</b>	<b>119 / 235</b>	<b>\$ 3,124.02</b>
<b>NOVEMBER 24</b>	<b>74 / 139</b>	<b>\$ 1,631.00</b>

**Additional Income:**

<b>Mission Envelope for Hurricanes</b>	<b>\$1,025.00 To Date</b>
<b>Reformation for Samaritan Center</b>	<b>\$745.00 To Date</b>

**Holy Baptism, November 17, 2024**



**DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES**

- 13 Jim & Cynthia Loesch 1975
- 13 Bill & Sharon Wyss 1996
- 16 Brian & Leann Hager 1989 **35 YRS**
- 27 Tony & Connie Miller 1997
- 28 Dave & Debbie Boyce 2011
- 29 Wilfred & Jennifer Plochberger 1990
- 29 Donald & Becky Weber 1973

**Congregational Council Meeting, November 11, 2024**

† The regular meeting was canceled and reports were sent out to everyone to discuss and comment on during the month. When all of the reports are finalized, they will be sent out electronically to our members and posted on the Narthex bulletin board.

**Walker Jordan Russell**

Was born on October 4, 2024 to wonderful parents Kelsey Bax and Jordan Russell. Walker was Baptized at St. Paul's Lutheran Church on Sunday, November 17, 2024 Sponsors are Paige Olsen and Trevor Bax

**Continued prayers for:**  
*Sherrie Hanks, Stacy McNamer, Debbie Boyce, Patty Ott, Cynthia Forck, Jerry Koestner, Richard Heidbreder, Don Buchta, Julie Carel, and all those we hold dear in our hearts.*

### **STARS: Jeannette Fischer**

Our November 13th meeting was attended by 32 people. We enjoyed fried chicken from Steve's Family Restaurant and mashed potatoes and gravy prepared by Donita. Afterward, we viewed a video produced by the Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve located near Strong City, Kansas. As usual, we do not meet in December or January. However, beginning in February we will resume our schedule with wonderful food, fellowship and interesting programs.

### **Mobile Food Pantry: Audrey Bunch**

The Mobile Food Truck on November 12th was held at Trinity Lutheran Church parking lot on a sunny fall day. We served 123 families with 300 people in those families. Items served were kale, sweet potatoes, eggs, turnips, onions, heads of lettuce, leaf lettuce, spaghetti squash, yellow and red apples, pancake mix, pancake syrup, canned corn, canned beans, mushrooms, salad bowls, milk, bananas, and frozen miscellaneous meats. Volunteers from Lohman Lions Club were Alberta and Gary Zumwalt, from St. Paul's Lutheran Church were Rosemary Heidebreder, Dan Tschirgi, Gary and Audrey Bunch. Next Mobile Food Truck will be held December 10th at 1:00 P.M.

### **GRIEF SHARE: Stacy Bubach**

Anyone who is struggling with loss has the opportunity to find comfort with others on Sunday, December 8, 2024 at 2:00 p.m. The theme is "**Surviving The Holidays**". This event is held at Living Hope Church located at 3011 S Ten Mile Drive, Jefferson City. This is the road behind McDonalds and Texas Roadhouse. Drive to the end of the road. See Stacy Bubach for more information.

### **ThankOffering Sunday Service: Erika Gerth**

This year's Thankoffering service was special in so many ways! St. Paul's Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, better known as WELCA, had the honor of leading the congregation in worship for much of the service. Pastor David's sermon, "A Woman's Complete Devotion", was very inspirational, and the baptism of Walker Jordan Russell added another element of joy to the day. The Bell choir's performance of "We Gather Together To Ask the Lord's Blessing" put smiles on everyone's faces and in honor of Walker Jordan's baptism, the Choir sang "Children of the Heavenly Father." It is our hope that this Thankoffering service led the congregation to a deeper understanding of the role of WELCA in our congregation. Many thanks to all the women who participated and special thanks to Pastor David for his guidance and support in making this service possible.

### **Poinsettias for the church:**

It is time to consider purchasing poinsettias to decorate the church sanctuary for the Christmas season. Please give your orders for the poinsettias to Kathryn Linsenbardt no later than Sunday, December 1st. You may call her at 782-4683. The cost this year is \$10.00 each. Please note if they are in honor or memory of someone.

### **Margaret Circle: Erika Gerth**

Members of Margaret Circle will gather at the home of Debbie Boyce on Tuesday, December 3, 2024, for fellowship and holiday cheer. We will gather at 6:00 PM for dinner, to be followed by our end-of-the year business meeting. Considering the needs of others is of great importance to our group. As we do at each meeting, we will determine which charities to support with the evening's offering. Margaret Circle Ladies extend to each reader of The Epistle a joyous and peaceful Advent as we prepare once again for the birth of Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Blessings to each of you!



**The St. Paul's Travel Group:**

The bus pulled out at 7:45 am from the St. Paul's parking lot and Pastor David was there before the sun came up to see them off and say a prayer for their safety and an enjoyable time together.



Thanks to David Russell for purchasing the group photo to use in the Epistle.



Thanks also to Stacy Bubach for photos at Branson.

Also thanks to Pastor David Viles for photos at St. Paul's and lots of prayers.







**WELCA German Christmas Cookie Sale – Trish Russell**

Our annual Cookie Sale will be held Sunday, December 1st from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm at the Community Bldg. Your home baked cookies, breads, candies, etc. are needed to make the sale successful. Please package your baked goodies on paper or plastic plates and we will price them. Cookies will be packaged and priced on Saturday, November 30th. We will still accept donations on Sunday morning. We appreciate all our great bakers and hope you will consider coming out for the Ham & Bean – Chicken Noodle Supper downstairs at the Community Bldg. Serving will be from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm.

**NOTE: Serving time begins at 11:00 AM this year.**

# **HAM & BEANS CHICKEN & NOODLE DINNER**



**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2024**

**LOHMAN COMMUNITY BUILDING  
8910 LINCOLN STREET  
LOHMAN, MO**

**Serving 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
All you can eat**

**Adults: \$13.00  
Children ages 5 - 12: \$6.00**

**Sponsored by: Lohman Community Corporation**



## **CHRISTMAS BAKE SALE**

**Many German Christmas Cookies**

**Starting at 11:00 a.m.**

**Sponsored by: St. Paul's Women of the ELCA**





## Calendar of Events and Schedules

- December 1st, Sunday:** Children's Sunday School
- December 1st, Sunday:** Cookie Sale and Ham & Bean supper at the Community Building.
- December 2nd, Monday:** Freundschaft Gruppe meets at 5:30 pm. for dinner followed by hanging the greens.
- December 3rd, Tuesday:** Worship and Music Meeting in the Basement of St. Paul's Church.
- December 3rd, Tuesday:** Margaret Circle will meet at 6 p.m. at Debbie Boyce home.
- December 8th, Sunday:** Advent Dinner begins with Sparkling juice at 5:30 pm & Dinner at 6:00 pm
- December 9th, Monday:** Church Council will meet at the home of Zola Finch.
- December 10th, Tuesday:** Food Pantry Volunteers at Trinity Lutheran in Russellville at 1:00 p.m.
- December 15th, Sunday:** Children's Sunday School
- December 17th, Tuesday:** Basement reserved for Lohman City Council 5:30 p.m.
- December 18th, Wednesday:** Mutual Ministry Meeting at 5:30 p.m.
- December 21st, Saturday:** The Christmas tree will be set up and decorated beginning at 1:00 p.m.
- December 22nd, Sunday:** Children's Christmas Play at 6:00 p.m.
- December 23rd, Monday:** Epistle Deadline for News and Articles.
- December 24th, Tuesday:** Christmas Eve Candle light service at 6:00 p.m.

Bulletins are normally printed on Wednesdays. Pastor David normally plans Fridays as his day off.

### Council Schedule

Dec - 01	Stacy Bubach
Dec - 08	AJ Ferrell
Dec - 15	Kent Nelson
Dec - 22	Frank Pascoe
Dec - 24	Jana Thompson
Dec - 29	Misty Schroeder

### Acolyte Schedule

Dec - 01	Madeline Stubinger
Dec - 08	Morgan Schroeder
Dec - 15	Lucas Plochberger
Dec - 22	Oliver Stoermer
Dec - 24	Madeline Stubinger
Dec - 29	Morgan Schroeder

### Greeters Schedule

Dec - 01	Jason Wood	Jacklyn Wood
Dec - 08	Rosemary Heidbreder	Richard Heidbreder
Dec - 15	Harry Thompson	Jana Thompson
Dec - 22	Audrey Bunch	Gary Elliott
Dec - 24	Devin Koestner	Jerry Koestner
Dec - 29	David Russell	Trish Russell

### Readers Schedule

Dec - 01	Frank Pascoe
Dec - 08	Marlene Carlson
Dec - 15	Nicole Benne
Dec - 22	Trish Russell
Dec - 24	Marie Scheperle
Dec - 29	Donald Weber

### Song Leader

Dec - 01	Dan Tschirgi
Dec - 08	Kathy Meller
Dec - 15	Dan Tschirgi
Dec - 22	Kathy Meller
Dec - 24	Kathy Meller
Dec - 29	Dan Tschirgi

### Audio / Video Technician

Dec - 01	Roger Pennell
Dec - 08	Dan Tschirgi
Dec - 15	Roger Pennell
Dec - 22	Dan Tschirgi
Dec - 24	Dan Tschirgi
Dec - 29	Roger Pennell

### Organist / Keyboard

Dec - 01	Kathy Meller
Dec - 08	Zola Finch
Dec - 15	Zola Finch
Dec - 22	Zola Finch
Dec - 24	Zola Finch
Dec - 29	Zola Finch

### Communionware for the Month

**Stacy Bubach and Family**

### Altar Flowers for the Month

**Kathryn Linsenbardt**

### Communion Assistants

Dec - 08	Jacklyn Wood
Dec - 22	Jason Plochberger
Dec - 24	Trish Russell

\* Communion Days noted in Yellow