

# DECEMBER 2025

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
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VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT [WWW.SAINTPAULAMES.ORG](http://WWW.SAINTPAULAMES.ORG)  
OR OUR FACEBOOK PAGE AT ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH, AMES, IA

REV. DR. TODD JENKS, PASTOR  
JACOB BIRKELAND, DCE INTERN  
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## A Note from Your Pastor

### Advent Evening Services

Do you remember these words Jesus spoke in a garden, the Garden of Gethsemane: "Could you not keep watch with me for one hour?" This month, as we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Savior, we invite you to come "keep watch" with Jesus at our Advent evening services. Our special Advent services of reflection are devotional services designed to be around 45 minutes in length. This year's meditations include thinking about the meaning of evergreens (Christmas trees), Christmas lights and the creche/nativity, as each of these traditions is a commemoration of Jesus: life, light and birth! Advent mid-week worship will be held at 7 p.m. December 3, 10 and 17. Come keep watch!

In Christ, our coming Savior, Pastor Jenks

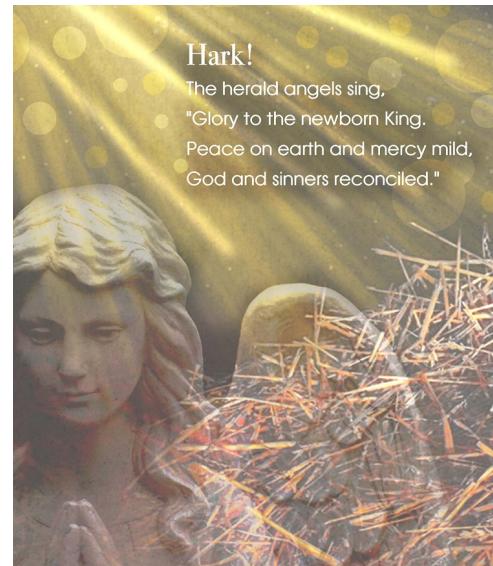
you in all you go through. You do not need to fear the evil of this world and the opponents of God's Word. You do not need to fear anything in life, thanks to our coming Savior Jesus Christ! Get ready to celebrate that joyful message of the angel as we celebrate our Savior at Christmas.

The hymn *Hark the Herald Angels Sing* has much to say about the message the angels proclaim of Jesus: He comes to make His blessings flow far as the curse is found! He is born that we no more may die! Light and life to all He brings, risen with healing in His wings!

In Christ, our coming Savior, Pastor Jenks

### Christmas: It's All About Jesus!

Life is full of things that make people fearful. So, remember this! "The angel said to them, *'Fear not, for behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be for all people. For unto you has been born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord'*" (Luke 2:10-11). Fear not, you have a Savior who is with



### **Inside this issue:**

Worship Schedule	<b>2</b>	Birthdays & Anniversaries
Human Care/Altar Guild	<b>3</b>	December Service Roster
Evangelism/Advent	<b>4</b>	BOD/Voters Minutes
Wellness	<b>5</b>	Preschool
Education and Youth	<b>6-8</b>	
Women's Ministry	<b>9-10</b>	

### **Our Mission Is:**

- To Know Jesus Christ as Savior & Lord,
- To Grow in faith through His Sacraments & Word, &
- To Go share His Gospel with love in our community & world.

# Worship Services at St. Paul Lutheran Church

## Wednesday, December 3

7:00 p.m. Advent Worship

## Sunday, December 7

10:00 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion

## Wednesday, December 10

7:00 p.m. Advent Worship

## Sunday, December 14

8:00 a.m. Worship Service  
10:00 a.m. Sunday School  
Christmas Program

## Wednesday, December 17

7:00 p.m. Advent Worship

## Sunday, December 21

10:00 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion

## Wednesday, December 24

### Christmas Eve

5:00 p.m. Candlelight Service  
7:00 p.m. Candlelight Service

## Thursday, December 25

### Christmas Day

10:00 a.m. Worship Service with Holy Communion

## Sunday, December 28

10:00 a.m. Worship Service



It's hard to believe it has already been almost a year since I moved here to serve with you all at St. Paul Lutheran Church... I suppose time flies when you're having fun! To say I have appreciated the warm welcome and support would be a great understatement; I have been so blessed to be able to work with you all here these past months. From the LCMS Youth Gathering to Vacation Bible School to the many service and outreach projects we have put together this year, it has been such a privilege to have all the support and encouragement as I have journeyed through this internship!! I am continuing to enjoy building relationships and getting to know each of you, and I pray God will continue to bless all of the work being done here. It has been so much fun to be a part of God's family this past year at SPLC, and see the Holy Spirit active and working through all of us. Thank you so much for your continued support and prayers as I deliberate through this call process, as well as your enthusiasm and willingness to take me on in ministry here. It has seriously been such a great opportunity to work, learn, and grow with you!

I'll keep you posted! God's got it.

~ Jacob Birkeland, DCE Intern

## Human Care

The Board of Human Care would like to thank all members who supported the HOPE Gift Market. We have broken the \$24,000 mark!

Your contributions mean so much to the organizations you supported. May God richly bless you!



Helping Other People Everywhere



Please come and help decorate the church for the joyous season of our Savior's birth.

Mark your calendars.

ADVENT BEGINS ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30<sup>TH</sup>.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3<sup>RD</sup> following the first Advent Service, please stay and help carry all the containers of Christmas decorations and banners from the old balcony for decorating on SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6<sup>TH</sup>.

More information will be coming in the church bulletin.

Poinsettias for the dedication to the glory and honor of our God and for the beautification of our sanctuary are available for the price of \$15.00 per plant this year.

The deadline to order is Sunday, December 7th. Order forms will be in the Sunday Announcement page the next couple of Sundays. This is a very special time to donate a poinsettia in memory of a very special date of celebration or in memory of a loved one. Watch the insert in the Announcement Page or copies will be available in the west entry of the church.



St. Paul members, Thank you for all your kind words and well wishes as I retire from the staff here. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as secretary and have many fond memories. God bless you all!

Julie Coy

## Evangelism



**December 7th** Come and help us kick off the Christmas Season with a Christmas Fellowship. Hot cocoa bar and cookie decorating tables. We will be catering a meal. Come and spread Christmas cheer and what a great way to celebrate with our church family. There will be a sign-up sheet in the Narthex giving the Evangelism Committee a count for the catering.

We are continuing to update the online directory, please continue to send in those photos! We miss seeing you! There are still quite a few photos needed.



### Donate Hats & Gloves

Hat and glove baskets are waiting to be filled; these will be donated to local charities in need.

Warm Regards,  
*Dee Malfaro*



We are looking for someone to prepare and serve the Advent meal for Dec. 17. Please contact the office or sign up on the bulletin board if your group may be interested.

Thank you to the following groups who are already signed up!

Dec 3– Women's Soup and Sweets

Dec 10– National Youth Gathering Youth serving spaghetti.



### Advent Meals

# Wellness Team

Christmas time is here-a time to celebrate the birth of our Risen Savior! It is a time of joy, togetherness and, if we are honest, a time of smorgasbord of irresistible treats. The tables groan under the weight of so much food-multiplying like the loaves and fishes! How do we balance the call to honor our bodies as a temple of the Lord with the overflowing of the tables?



Consider:

Gratitude! Slow down and give thanks! Then stay slowed down as you eat, to really taste and enjoy! God gave you those wonderful flavors and textures-don't wolf them down. Taking small bites often gives as much flavor and pleasure as stuffing your mouth full!

Portion control parable: think about your serving sizes like the widow's oil-small but miraculously satisfying.

The rainbow: How many colors are on your plate? If you are the host, are you providing many colorful options-not just fruit flavored jellybeans, but fruit & vegetables? If you are a guest, can you bring colors to complement the meal?

Self-control is a fruit of the spirit, as is Joy! Maybe use both? Joyful conversation has no calories and endless rewards.

Lifegiving water! Water refreshes and revitalizes us. Dehydration and fatigue go together and, often, people eat when they want a recharge. Drink up!

Joyful movement. Jesus walked. Praise God that we can walk and enjoy His creation and have fellowship with others as we walk. Walking and other activities helps us handle stress of the holidays, manage hunger, and many other healthful blessings.

Rest. Jesus took time away from the hustle and bustle of life to connect with his Father, resting. Sleep those 7-9 hours and rest in His arms.

Forgive. Others. Yourself. God's grace is bigger than your plate.

This CHRISTmas Season, embrace the joy and laughter that comes with gathering together. Eat mindfully, love generously, laugh often. Savor the moments and the food (especially the pie!). Healthy holiday eating is about balance, thankfulness-not deprivation. As Proverbs 17:22 reminds us, "A cheerful heart is good medicine."

So, bring on the cheer, and maybe just one slice of pie! And above all, remember that the greatest feast is found in fellowship-with Jesus Christ and with one another. Merry Christmas!



## Education & Youth

### CHRISTMAS



### PROGRAM

Christmas program practice for 3rd-12th grade will take place on **Saturday, December 6, from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.** A second program practice for all children, from preschool through 12th grade, will take place on **Saturday, December 13, from 9:00 to 10:30 am.** Middle and High School youth interested in participating in the ensemble should bring their instruments.

**There will be no Midweek Classes on December 24 or 31, and no Sunday School classes on December 28.** We look forward to seeing everyone again in January. As a reminder, we follow Ames Community School District guidance on winter weather. If school is cancelled due to unsafe conditions, Midweek classes will also be cancelled. Stay safe & warm!



### Jr Youth Gathering Recap

St. Paul was well represented in October at the IDW Jr Youth Gathering in West Des Moines. The theme was "Not Just Water". We had 9 youth and 2 leaders attend and Jacob was even a session leader!

### Note:

- No LYF in December due to Christmas program preparations, Advent meals and services.
- We are trying to organize a lock-in sometime in the near future. Look for emails and announcements.
- January we will resume with activities-bowling and pizza!

### NYG Our Iowa Calendar Fundraiser

The youth attending the next Youth Gathering will be selling OUR IOWA 2026 wall calendars as a fundraiser again this year! Look for information and signs on sale dates soon. Remember calendars are great as Christmas or birthday gifts, or for your home or office! Thank you for your continued support!

**On Sunday, December 21, we will have a Christmas Craft and movie-watching opportunity for our Sunday School students.**



### They've Escaped!

The high school LYF group escaped Camelot at Escape Iowa recently. It was a great lesson in teamwork while having fun!

## Education & Youth

### NOVEMBER LYF—Caring For Others

November was our youth service activities. Our high school LYF members packed fun care packages to be mailed to our college freshman. The theme was Red. Everything that went in the boxes were red to go along with an encouraging note saying that they are incREDible and inspiRED others. It also included some inspirational bible verses.



More of the team from page 6 that had escaped Camelot at Escape Iowa!

### Thank you!

To our volunteers Inez Smith, Wayne & Marilyn Hagemoser and Fritz family who provided a great lasagna dinner for our youth and volunteers on Nov 12. It was greatly appreciated by both our youth and youth board.

## Education & Youth



Our 3-8th grade LYF was of service by packing 116 Operation Christmas Child boxes! These boxes will go to kids all over the world to spread love and kindness. They also prepared and signed Christmas cards that will be sent to our shut-ins.



## Women's Ministry

All women of the congregation are invited to join the Family Service group for our annual Christmas Luncheon on Dec. 11 at noon. Please sign up on the bulletin board so we know how many to expect. If you would like to bring a dish to pass, it is appreciated.



### The Perpetual Call for Pastors and Teachers

LWML 2025–2027 Mission Grant 4 — \$100,000

*Set Apart to Serve* is a Synod-wide program focused on forming and recruiting full-time pastors and church workers. Supplying the church with church workers is one of the highest priorities of the LCMS, since pastors and commissioned church workers preach and teach the Word of Christ through which the Holy Spirit creates and sustains faith. The demand for more pastors, Lutheran school teachers, and commissioned church workers is urgent.

*Set Apart to Serve* is providing resources to encourage intentional conversations with youth to pursue a church work vocation. This is leading to increased enrollment in the church worker formation programs at the LCMS Concordia universities and the seminaries. Districts and churches are being encouraged to reach out to their youth through workshops and conferences.



The heart of *Set Apart To Serve* (SAS) is the formation of church workers to ensure that LCMS continues to proclaim and teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ in our congregations and communities until Christ returns. Pastors and professional church workers are indispensable to accomplishing each of the Synod's seven mission priorities.

This grant will help to cover a part of the expenses of creating resources, travel and presentations at workshops and conferences, and staffing.

# Women's Ministry

## LWML Mite Update:

2023-2025 National Mission goal: \$2,622,270.00

We normally collect mites for missions on the 1st Sunday of each month. Place your Mites in the large Mite Box in the narthex. For more information about LWML go to [www.lwml.org](http://www.lwml.org).



**FAMILY SERVICE** ~ We will be taking the month of December off from quilting. We will resume our quilting on January 8 from 10-2. Come and join us.



## Ladies— you are invited to “60 Forward”

(the new senior center behind Hobby Lobby) for an informal coffee group on Nov. 7th at 1:00 pm. We will meet the first Friday of each month. Come and join us!

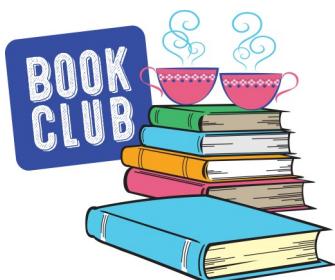


**Thank you to all who participated in the Angel Tree program this year.** We know the families are very thankful for the gifts they receive.

GIFTS ARE DUE DEC. 14.



## “Book to Know to Help You Grow”



**Our book list for the next year is below.** Our book club is open to all members of the congregation. Just read the book & show up for the discussion. Questions? Contact Connie Lastine at 515-292-4992.

Our next book for Jan. 15 at 2:15 pm is “The Edge of Belonging” by Amanda Cox. Synopsis: When Ivy Rose returns to her hometown to oversee an estate sale, she soon discovers that her grandmother left behind more than trinkets and photo frames--she provided a path to the truth behind Ivy's adoption. Shocked, Ivy seeks clues to her past, but a key piece to the mystery is missing.

Twenty-four years earlier, Harvey James finds an abandoned newborn who gives him a sense of human connection for the first time in his life. His desire to care for the baby runs up against the stark fact that he is homeless. When he becomes entwined with two people seeking to help him find his way, Harvey knows he must keep the baby a secret or risk losing the only person he's ever loved.

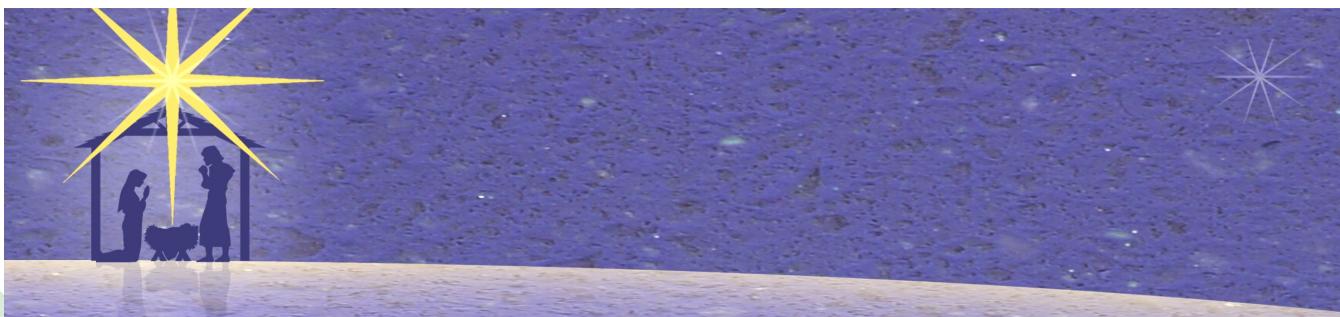
In this dual-time story from debut novelist Amanda Cox, the truth--both the search for it and the desire to keep it from others--takes center stage as Ivy and Harvey grapple with love, loss, and letting go.

Date	Location	Book
Jan 15, 2026, 2:15 pm	St. Paul Fellowship Hall	“The Edge of Belonging” by Amanda Cox
March 12, 2026, 2:15 pm	St. Paul Fellowship Hall	“Emerald Windows” by Terri Blackstock
May 14, 2026, 7 pm	TBA	“Appalachian Song” by Michelle Shocklee

# December 2025 Sunday Service Roster

Thank you for serving!

	December 7 10:00 am	December 14 8:00 am	December 14 10:00 am Sunday School Program	December 21 10:00 am	December 28 10:00 am
Organist	LaDonna Osborn	LaDonna Osborn	LaDonna Osborn	LaDonna Osborn	Praise Team
Elders	Steve Johnson	Steve Johnson	Jake Vogel	Jake Vogel	Jake Vogel
Lectors	Marilyn Hagemoser	Marilyn Hagemoser		Larry Wiebel	Larry Wiebel
Acolytes	Joseph Fritz			Sullivan Rees	
Ushers	Tom Henriksen, Dave Osborn, Mike West, Inez Smith	Mark & Janelle Swenson, Reiny & Maureen Friedrich	Tom Henriksen, Dave Osborn, Mike West, Inez Smith	Tom Henriksen, Dave Osborn, Mike West, Inez Smith	Tom Henriksen, Dave Osborn, Mike West, Inez Smith
Greeters	Wayne & Marilyn Hagemoser, Paul & Adele Knop	Wayne & Marilyn Hagemoser, Paul & Adele Knop	Wayne & Marilyn Hagemoser, Paul & Adele Knop	Tice Missional Group	Dick & Linda Peterson, Paul & Adele Knop
Valet Parker	Tom Peter	Paul Knop	Paul Knop	Brent Peterson	Jim George
Offering Counters					
Altar Guild	Karen Griffin & Angie Rouse	Connie Buss		Connie Buss	
Power Point	Nathan Birtell	Breanna Wetzler	Sarah Fahrmann	Amy Carver	Tom Baas
Sound Board	Katie Birtell	Matthew Scheuermann	Ben Fahrmann	Shaun Carver	
Camera	Eric Phipps		Matt Carver	Harry Mundt	Harry Mundt



# December 2025 Special Service Roster

Thank you for serving!

	December 3 7:00 pm Advent I	December 10 7:00 pm Advent II	December 17 7:00 pm Advent III	December 24 5:00 pm Christmas Eve	December 24 7:00 pm Christmas Eve	December 25 10:00 am Christmas Day
Organist	LaDonna Osborn	LaDonna Osborn	LaDonna Osborn	LaDonna Osborn	LaDonna Osborn	Zach Heilman
Elders	Greg Buttery	Steve Johnson	Jake Vogel	Dean Kaufman	Lynn Dreyer	????
Lectors	Nancy Carper	Reiny Friedrich	Inez Smith	Tom Peter	Jeromy Fritz	Vickie Roach
Acolytes						Lance Thomas
Ushers	Linda Goldsberry, Larry Wiebel, Glenn & Nancy Carper	Reiny & Maureen Friedrich, Wayne & Marilyn Hagemoser	Steve & Marlene Johnson, Harry & Pam Mundt	Dave Osborn, Drue Sander, Mark & Heather Scheuermann	Mark & Janelle Swenson, Denny & Shirley Tice	Reiny & Maureen Friedrich, Jeromy & Angela Fritz
Greeters	Gretchen Zitterich, Larry Wiebel	Katie Friedrich, Denny & Shirley Tice	Dawn Schulte, Inez Smith	Tom & Judy Peter, Dick & Linda Peterson	Katie Friedrich, Jeromy & Angela Fritz	Vickie Roach, Mark & Janelle Swenson
Valet Parker						
Offering Counters						
Altar Guild				Judy Peter	Judy Peter	
Power Point	Breanna Wetzler	Amy Carver	Cindy Baas	Matthew Scheuermann	Tom Baas	Cindy Baas
Sound Board	Tom Peter					
Camera	Matt Carver	Matt Carver	Tom Baas	Matt Carver		Tom Baas



## St. Paul Lutheran Preschool December 2025 News

Christmas is a **VERY** joyous time at St. Paul Lutheran Preschool! I would have to say it is one of my most favorite times of the year to be with the very excited preschoolers. The reason I like it so much is because of the children's energy, excitement, and pure wonderment during the entire season. Yes, they might not listen as well, and they might walk around like they are in a dream; but why is this? The Christmas season looks, smells, feels, sounds, and tastes so very different from any other time of the year. So, who doesn't like to look at the magical shiny lights all around town or feel the soft cold snowflakes falling onto your face. What about the delicious smells coming from the kitchen and then being able to put that tasty warm cookie right into your mouth. The entire season feels so **EXTRA** special for the preschoolers and it should feel that way for all of us. With this abundance of excitement, the teachers channel it into the **BIGGEST** joy of the season – JESUS!

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

The preschoolers take this excitement and store it in their hearts knowing Jesus was born for them. With this new knowledge about Jesus' birthday the children can go and share it with their friends and family. The preschoolers will share this **Christmas Joy** at their Christmas Program on Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup> at 4 pm. You are invited to join us to witness the joy of the season. It is truly worth celebrating!

