

# Epistle

December 2023 | Monthly Newsletter  
Saint Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church  
19 West Pennsylvania Ave., Walkersville, MD 21793  
301-845-4600 | [www.SaintPaulslutheranchurch.org](http://www.SaintPaulslutheranchurch.org)



## CHRISTMAS SERVICES

The fourth Sunday of Advent falls on Christmas Eve this year. We will have our 9:00am Sunday Advent service as well as our traditional 7:00pm Christmas Eve Service. Please consider joining us in person to celebrate the birth of our Lord.

You may join in the Livestream services via our Facebook page [@saintpaulslutheranofwalkersville](https://www.facebook.com/saintpaulslutheranofwalkersville). You can also watch live by going directly to our Website, [www.saintpaulslutheranchurch.org](http://www.saintpaulslutheranchurch.org). The videos will be available on our page after the live recording for you to view whenever and wherever you may be this Christmas.

We pray during the Advent and Christmas Seasons, that we all can keep our mission statement in mind and at the forefront of our actions, *“Through Christ, we joyfully feed the body, mind, and spirit of all.”*

## POINSETTIAS

The Season is upon us! It's time to decorate the nave for Christmas!

Help us adorn our worship space in honor of our Savior's birth by purchasing a Poinsettia!

Red are available for \$10.00 each.

Click the link, <https://forms.gle/o63FE7QbApsKuyw5> to order on line, sign up in church or in person at the Parish Office with a check or cash.

**The deadline for ordering is Sunday, December 17th.**



## December Birthdays

- Dec. 2—Elias Plowman
- Dec. 3—Matthew Plowman
- Dec. 4—Candace Foucart  
Benjamin Zeller
- Dec. 5—Jimmy Ake
- Dec. 8—Katrina Pank
- Dec. 12—Charles Easterday, Jr.
- Dec. 16—Dylan Barrett  
Chris Leins
- Dec. 17—Debra Horton
- Dec. 20—Harper Jennings
- Dec. 22—Holly Fouche  
Madelyn Kahler
- Dec. 24—Russ Mildenstein
- Dec. 26—Gary Barrett, Jr.  
Ella Johnson
- Dec. 28—Amy Mildenstein
- Dec. 29—Kathryn King
- Dec. 31—John Baker  
Mike Waas



The Christkindlmarket is Dec. 2nd from 9am – 3pm. It begins with a parade starting at 10am on Main Street and looping around to Fulton ending on Pennsylvania Avenue. We will have vendors in the church overflow and Parish Hall selling handmade crafts. Activities for the kids, a bake sale, wreath contest, and food and drink available to purchase.

Drop off for bake sale items will be in the Parish Hall Thursday November 30th, and Friday December 1st from 9am-1pm.



**Now through December 3rd – Submit names of loved ones to receive a Winter Love bag to the Parish Office either via email: [officeadministrator@Sainttpaulslutheranchurch.org](mailto:officeadministrator@Sainttpaulslutheranchurch.org) or by phone 31-845-4600.**

Congregational Life Committee is asking for your support by donating monies for last minute fresh food or by purchasing the following items to help us fill the comfort bags: packaged hard candy bags, cough drops, Chapstick (brand), playing cards, word search books, puzzle books, Kleenex small square boxes, any prepackaged snacks, or anything that will bring care and love to shut-ins.

Now through December 8th - Donations can be dropped off at the Parish Office during office hours, 9am-1pm or on Sundays (church).



*We are again blessed that an anonymous donor has offered a matching challenge of \$3,000 to assist where most needed by the end of the year. If members of the congregation can contribute \$3,000 over and above their normal giving the anonymous member will match the contribution.*

*If you are writing a check, please include "Challenge" on the memo line. If you prefer to give on-line, please use the "GIVE NOW" button and choose the undesignated selection in the Fund dropdown and add "Challenge" in the "Note" section. The deadline for the challenge is Monday, December 25th.*

## Advent Devotionals

We will be using the devotional published by Luther Seminary this Advent season. You can access it several ways:

1. Go to this link: <https://www.luthersem.edu/godpause/advent-devotional/> and download the regular or large print to print at home.
2. Click Subscribe to God Pause to receive the devotion through your email each day in advent (put in your name and email, and check the "God Pause Daily Devotions" box.)
3. Pick up a regular or large print version from the side table at church. (limited copies available). Be sure to get your copy!



# Pastor's Peace

*The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the LORD; Make straight in the desert a highway for our God. <sup>4</sup> Every valley shall be exalted And every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough places smooth; <sup>5</sup>The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken." Isaiah 40:3-5*

Advent marks the beginning of the church calendar. It traditionally starts on the Sunday closest to St. Andrew's Day (December 3rd) and continues for four Sundays until Christmas. During this time the liturgical paraments and vestments in many churches will change to violet to recognize Advent as a time of preparation and repentance as well as a symbol of the royalty of the coming King. The color blue can also be used as a symbol of anticipation and hope.

Christians in many countries have adopted various traditions of lighting candles during Advent to observe this as the time of the coming of Christ who is the light of the world. One widespread tradition is the use of an Advent wreath both in the church and the home to mark each Sunday in the Advent season. While the origin of this as an Advent tradition dates back to the Lutheran church following the Reformation, the current form commonly used today was developed more recently and is used in many other Christian churches throughout the world. The wreath is made out of evergreens in the shape of a circle to represent eternal life. It consisted of four candles originally; three purple or blue candles to match the liturgical colors and one pink candle lit on the 3rd Sunday in Advent. This 3rd Sunday is known as Gaudete Sunday, meaning "rejoice" in Latin and comes from Philippians 4:4. Lighting this 3rd candle, Christians relax the fast to rejoice for the promised Messiah is coming soon. Many Advent wreaths also have a 5th candle, the Christ candle, which is lit during the time of Christmas, symbolizing that Christ, the light of the world, has entered the darkness.

Chrismons™ Ornaments were originated and first made for use on the Christmas tree of Ascension Lutheran Church in Danville, Virginia, in 1957 by Mrs. Frances Kipps Spencer, a church member. The designs were monograms of and symbols for our Lord Jesus Christ. Because these designs have been used by his followers since biblical times, they are the heritage of all Christians and serve to remind each of us regardless of denomination of the One we follow. All Chrismons™ Ornaments are made in a combination of white and gold to symbolize the purity and majesty of the Son of God and the Son of Man.



## Pastor's Peace cont'd

As with the Christmas tree, the evergreen tree itself, for Christians, "symbolizes the eternal life Jesus Christ provides". However, the Chrismon tree differs from the traditional Christmas tree in that it "is decorated only with clear lights and Chrismons made from white and gold material", the latter two being the liturgical colors of the Christmas season. The double loop/figure 8 explains, symbolically, our Lord's life and the nature of God within the framework of the Christian year. The upper loop proclaims the Triune God; the lower loop, read counterclockwise, shows God's revelation of himself in the life of Jesus.

As we enter this season of anticipation and hope, let us be focused on the needs of our neighbors in our church, community, and world. It is easy to get wrapped up in the hype of the commercial aspect of the season, but it is incumbent upon us to reflect on the goodness in our lives and the realization that Christ is in our lives, ever present and always the steadying force. Take a moment to prepare your hearts for the commemoration of the birth of our Savior and the promise that He will come again in glory. This is the season in which we look to the eternal life we have been promised in Jesus Christ. We remember this promise and find rebirth, reconciliation, and promise for us in our Baptism and in the sharing of the Lord's Supper.

**For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given;  
And the government will be upon His shoulder. And  
His name will be called Wonderful Counselor ,  
Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
Isaiah 9:6**

Should you have any questions or concerns, I am glad to speak with you at any time.

Peace , Pastor Phil

Email: [pastor@saintpaulslutheranchurch.org](mailto:pastor@saintpaulslutheranchurch.org)

Cell phone: 202-497-0584

# Caring for the Body of Christ

December 2023

Submitted by Deb Horton, RN, Retired

December is a month of reflection, busy times and of course, holiday celebrations. Some attention to our health is always in order though, and it is important even in this busy time of the year.

One health issue that is important to consider is that of our blood sugar status. Not the first thing you think about? It can be a rude awakening if the doctor decides to order an A1C for your next routine visit! The A1C blood test measures average blood glucose levels of an individual over a several month time period. This gives a better understanding of the effectiveness of the body's handling of glucose.

Our country has a chronic health problem with Diabetes and Pre-diabetes in many individuals. There are about 98 million American adults who have "pre-diabetes" -that's 1 in 3 adults. Of those 98 million more than 8 in 10 don't even know they have a problem! Without acting, many people with prediabetes could develop type 2 diabetes within 5 years. It's important to learn more about this and take action.

**What are Prediabetes and Diabetes?** Having **prediabetes** means your blood glucose levels are higher than normal – but not high enough to be diagnosed as diabetic. These levels have been subject to change over time due to increased research in the field of prevention and treatment. Prediabetes can lead to heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes, the most common form of diabetes. The good news is that prediabetes can often be reversed. With **type 2 diabetes**, your body cannot properly use insulin (a hormone that helps glucose get into the cells of the body.) You can get type 2 diabetes at any age, but you are at higher risk if you are older, overweight, have a family history of diabetes, are not physically active, or are a woman who had gestational diabetes (high blood sugars while pregnant). Even if your blood sugars return to normal after the pregnancy, this seems to still be a risk factor. **Type 1 diabetes** means your body cannot make insulin and you must take it every day. Type 1 is less common than type 2, approximately 5-10% of the people who have diabetes have type 1. Currently, no one knows how to prevent type 1 diabetes.

## Who Is at Risk for Prediabetes and Type 2 Diabetes?

The following risk factors may put you at higher risk than others for prediabetes and type 2 diabetes.

- ◆ You are overweight
- ◆ You are 45 years of age or older
- ◆ Your parent or sibling has type 2 diabetes
- ◆ You are physically active fewer than 3 times a week
- ◆ You ever gave birth to a baby that weighed more than 9 lbs
- ◆ You ever had diabetes while pregnant. **Diabetes has Serious Consequences**

Diabetes is currently the eighth leading cause of death in the US. If you have prediabetes or are at risk for developing it, talk to your health care provider. A recognized lifestyle change program is one of the most effective ways to prevent getting type 2 diabetes! Your provider can help!

Blessings of this Holy Season to all.

# Christmas at Victoria Park



On Saturday, December 23<sup>rd</sup>, St. Paul's will host a "Cocoa, Coffee, Cookies, and Caroling" event from 3-5 pm.



In preparation for this event, we are collecting gently used (or new) holiday mugs that we will give to the residents as a holiday gift. If you have any mugs to spare, we would love to have them. You can place your donations in either of the boxes marked, "Mugs for Victoria Park." located in the Parish Hall or in the church.

In addition, if you would be interested in caroling, donating cookies or a holiday snack, please use this sign-up link: [www.PerfectPotluck.com/MSIM6231](http://www.PerfectPotluck.com/MSIM6231).

Thank you all for your continued support. The residents of Victoria Park are extremely grateful for everyone's efforts.



## Hats & Mitten Tree

*Give the gift of warmth!!*

Now through December 15th you can hang hats and mittens on the tree in the front of the overflow area or drop them off at the Parish Office Monday through Friday between 9am and 1pm. All donations will go to Glade Valley for families in need.



## **'Calling all the helpers!'**

We are at that time of year when the outgoing council members are seeking new hands to continue our work as the leadership of St Paul's. If you have ever felt a calling or curiosity about council leadership and what we do, please seek out Pastor, Trish, Patty, Russ or any council member for answers! We currently have two people committed to running for our four open positions, so we have plenty of room for you!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- December 2 — Christkindl Market
- December 3 — First Sunday of Advent, Ministry Sunday
- December 5 — Executive council
- December 10 — Second Sunday of Advent
- December 17 — Third Sunday of Advent
- December 19 — Council
- December 23 — Cocoa, Coffee, Cookies & Carols @ Victoria Park
- December 24 — Fourth Sunday of Advent, 9am Worship  
Christmas Eve 7pm Service
- December 25 — Christmas
- December 31 — New Year's Eve, 9am Lessons & Carols

