

# Epistle

December 2024 | 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

On Christmas Eve this year. We will have 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, to order on line, <https://forms.gle/PMstwNs4xzYbcR5ZA>, sign up in church or in person at the Parish Office with a check or cash.

**The deadline for ordering is Sunday, December 15th.**



## December Birthdays

- Dec. 2—Elias Plowman  
Journey Gardner
- 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





*christkindl*  
— M A R K E T —

The Christkindlmarket is Dec. 7th from 9am – 2pm. 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 December 5th, and Friday December 6th from 9am-1pm.



**Now through December 8th – 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 15th - Donations can be dropped off at the Parish Office during office hours, 9am-1pm or on Sundays (church).

## End of the Year GIVING CHALLENGE

*We are again blessed that an anonymous donor has offered a matching challenge of \$2,000 to assist where most needed by the end of the year. If members of the congregation can contribute \$2,000 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 Sunday, December 29th.*

## 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*

We understand Advent as a season of both reflection, waiting, and longing. We reflect on the fulfillment of God's promises in Christ's first advent, while also looking ahead in eager expectation to His return. During this time, the themes of hope, peace, joy, and love are central as we wait for the coming Savior. These themes resonate for us as we light the weekly candles in our Advent wreath culminating with the lighting of the Christ Candle recalling Christ's birth so many years ago. During our Advent journey, we remember Christ's First Coming (The Nativity) and the humble birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, an event that changed the course of history. We reflect on the incarnation, God becoming human in Jesus Christ and the wonder of this mystery. As we wait for Christmas, we prepare to celebrate not just the birth of a child, but the coming of the Savior of the world.

We revel in Christ's Ongoing Presence in the World Today and are also called us to recognize Christ's presence in our lives now. Through the Word, the sacraments, and the community of the Church, Christ comes to us. We are reminded He is with us always, in times of joy and in times of sorrow, and He continues to speak to us through His Word. We also look forward with anticipation for Christ's second coming, the Parousia, the return of Christ in glory. In the Apostles' Creed, we confess Jesus will come again to judge the living and the dead. This second coming is a source of hope and comfort, as we trust Christ will restore all things and bring about the fullness of God's Kingdom.

During our Advent Journey of expectation we will reflect on the themes of our Advent wreath. In Week 1 we look back on the prophecy of the coming of the Christ child. We will wander in Hope and ponder about how God's promises offer hope to a weary world. In Week 2 we will meditate on the peace Christ brings.



## Pastor's Peace cont'd

We will enjoy the peace of the angelic announcement to the shepherds and consider how Christ is our peace. This leads us closer to the Joy we will experience and allow our hearts to rejoice in the coming of the Savior in Week 3. More importantly we will be able to revel in the Joy of knowing God is with us. In our final week of Advent we will take delight in the Love of God made manifest in Jesus Christ and reflect on the amazing gift of God's Love given in the birth of Christ.

Advent is a season of joy. While it is a time of reflection and even repentance, it is also a time of rejoicing. Christ has come and Christ will come again! As we light the Advent candles each week, we celebrate the promise of Christ's presence in our lives. We are reminded of the light of Christ coming into the world to dispel the darkness of sin and death. There is cause for Hope, Peace, Love, and Joy which is found in the promise of the Messiah. Christ as our Truth ushers in our Advent themes and lives them fully to grant us God's Grace.

***"But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as children of God."***  
***Galatians 4:4-5***

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



# Council Corner

Submitted by Sheila Kahler

**Happy December!** The year has flown by and now we enter the season of Advent as we prepare our hearts and minds for the celebration of Christmas.

**Generosity Ministry is still accepting time and talent sheets.** There are extra copies in the overflow area to complete and place in the offering plate or hand them to a member of the Generosity Ministry Team (Charlotte, Hope, Sam, or myself). Thank you to those who have completed and turned in their time and talent sheets.

## What is the role of Congregation Council?

December is the month Congregation Council seeks out nominees to **prayerfully consider** serving on Council, a 2-year term (Feb 2025 – Jan 2027). Council Meetings are held once-a-month on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday @ 7 PM in the Parish Hall.

- To serve on council, one must be a voting member of this congregation.
- Council term is a 2-year-term, no more than 3 full terms consecutively (6 years total).
- Term starts at the close of the annual meeting (last Sunday in January) at which they are elected.
- Congregation Council has the general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. (C12.04)
- Congregation Council is responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation. (C12.05)
- Congregation Council elects its Officers – president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer - following the annual meeting. Officers serve on the Executive Ministry, which meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday each month @ 7 PM in the Parish Hall.
- Each Congregation Council member is a liaison to a Ministry (i.e., Property, Finance, Christian Education, Worship & The Arts, Congregational Life, Outreach, Generosity, and Media/Tech).

If you're thinking "I'm not a leader" or "I can't do that" or **you want to see Council in action, we invite you to attend the December council meeting on December 17<sup>th</sup> @ 7 PM in the Parish Hall.** Note: The monthly council meetings are always OPEN to the congregation to attend.

On a personal note, having served on council for most of my time at St. Paul's (I will be celebrating 30 years at St. Paul's in Feb 2025), it has provided me with a wealth of knowledge on how a church operates, the history of St. Paul's (past and present), involvement in the vision/mission/goals for this congregation, the opportunities to connect and collaborate with others serving on council and working with other members of this congregation in the work God is calling us to do in serving others. Yes, serving on Council is a time commitment, however, I'm very grateful and blessed for all the years you continue to elect and support me in serving on Congregation Council. I would be happy to speak with anyone who wants to know more or might be considering serving on Congregation Council.

Sheila Kahler  
Vice President, Congregation Council



*Hope, Peace, Joy, Love*

## This is the time we QUIET our HEARTS for WORSHIP

Worship is a place of gathering, fellowship, music, reflection, and reverence to God. In this space we come together to greet one another after being apart as well as joining our friends and family in witnessing to the one who gave His all on the Cross. We have a variety of methods by which we accomplish this to include, hearing the word of God, lifting our voices in praise of God, and meditating on that which prepares us and sends us from worship. Our choir, lectors, organist, and pastor go to great lengths to prepare a meaningful and inspiring experience in our congregation. One important aspect of this gathering is to respect the folks who are leading worship by maintaining a quiet space for others to embrace what they are seeking in worship. I have mentioned “noisy church” in the past and that is in deference to our children who are just learning and experiencing worship, many for the first time. We as adults should be a model for our quiet time and respect the gifts being offered in our worship space. Thank you.



### 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.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

- December 1 — First Sunday of Advent, Ministry Sunday
- December 3 — Community Dinner
- December 4 — Walkersville Tree Lighting, 7pm
- December 7 — Christkindl, 9am-2pm
- December 8 — Second Sunday of Advent
- December 15 — Third Sunday of Advent
- December 17 — Council
- December 21 — Community Dinner
- December 22 — Fourth Sunday of Advent
- December 24 — Christmas Eve 7pm Service
- December 25 — Christmas
- December 31 — New Year's Eve

