

JANUARY EPISTLE



ST. PAUL'S EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH, SCHOOL AND EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER (ECC)

JANUARY 2025



Come Behold the Wondrous Mystery

Allison Mackie, Director of Parish Music

*Come behold the wondrous mystery, in the dawning of the King
He the theme of heaven's praises, robed in frail humanity.
In our longing in our darkness, now the light of life has come.
Look to Christ, who condescended, took on flesh to ransom us.*

*Come behold the wondrous mystery, He the perfect Son of Man.
In His living, in His suffering, never trace, nor stain of sin.
See the true and better Adam, come to save the hellbound man.
Christ the great and sure fulfillment of the law, in Him we stand.*

*Come behold the wondrous mystery, Christ the Lord upon the tree.
In the stead of ruined sinners hangs the Lamb in victory.
See the price of our redemption, see the Father's plan unfold.
Bringing many sons to glory; grace unmeasured, love untold.*

*Come behold the wondrous mystery, slain by death, the God of life.
But no grace could e'er restrain Him. Praise the Lord, He is alive!
What a foretaste of deliverance, how unwavering our hope.
Christ in power resurrected, as we will be when He comes.*

The text of this modern hymn (written by Matt Boswell, Matt Papa, and Michael Bleecker) captures the themes of the Epiphany season. Beginning on January 6 and continuing until Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, we celebrate the mystery of God revealed to us through the person of Jesus Christ.

This hymn follows Jesus throughout His earthly life, first in joining us as a frail, helpless infant. He grew to adulthood, living a perfect life and fulfilling the Law in the way that we never can. Most importantly, He took our place, receiving the punishment that we deserved, and declaring victory over death by His death. Finally, He rose from the dead, as the Lord of Life cannot remain swallowed by the grave. We are united with Him by Baptism and look forward with hope to the day when He will return and resurrect those still dead.

As we begin the new year, let's take time to reflect on the mystery of Christ's incarnation, life, death, and resurrection. Let's receive the gifts of His body and blood in the Divine Service. Let's hear His Word that reveals His love for us.

CCLI Song # 7026028

Matt Boswell | Matt Papa | Michael Bleecker

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Dispatches from The Office

Rev. Lance Armstrong O'Donnell, Senior Pastor

A Time for Silence

"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: . . . a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak." (Ecclesiastes 3:1,7, ESV)

Dear Friends,

As you receive this January 2025 edition of the *Epistle* I will be in the midst of our family's annual post-Christmas trip to see my mother in NC and then for family time at the grandparents' condo in Florida. After our family vacation, though, I will not be back at St. Paul's until February 1st. During my month of respite (more about that in a moment) liturgical and catechetical assistance for Pastor Schockman will be provided by Rev. Dr. Nathan Meador, Rev. Ryan Schroeder, and Rev. Dr. Neil Rand. My colleague and friend, Rev. David Dukovan (who serves our small sister parish in Lake Mills) will provide pastoral care support.

Most of you probably didn't notice anything, but something happened last summer and early fall: I fell into what is commonly called "pastoral burnout." I hadn't experienced anything like it since my early 20's. I couldn't explain it. A life-long prayer was answered with the birth of my grandson. I have a happy marriage, a wonderful family, a parish I love, and a vocation that gives me joy. I pretty-much have everything I ever wanted . . . but I was struggling to do even the most basic parts of my pastoral vocation and languished at home. In response, I did what I tell all of you to do in such circumstances: I sought pastoral care; I went regularly to see my counselor. When things were most acute I had a frank conversation with the Head Elder, Dave Meyer and with Dan Eifert, our Congregational President. I knew I was in trouble. I wasn't going to make it to my planned sabbatical in 2026, and they could see it. We agreed, in conversation with the elders, that if I could push through to Christmas then I could receive January 2025 as a time of respite and renewal. So, in January I'll be formally disconnected from my senior pastor vocation. During that time, I'll be in prayer and meditation and, God-willing, "refilling my bucket" with the creative writing that is—I have discovered—so important to my soul.

I am thankful to have elders, and a congregation, with whom I can confide. So many of my colleagues in similar situations have not been given respite, and the consequences were often disastrous. If you want some more information about why such extended periods of respite can be necessary for pastors, consider listening to my colleague, Rev. David Peterson, on the wonderful radio program, "Issues, Etc." Here's the link: <https://issuesetc.org/2023/02/02/0333-pastoral-sabbaticals-pr-david-petersen-2-2-23/>. I am hosting a fireside chat on February 22, 2025 at 3pm to discuss my month of respite and my planned sabbatical in 2026.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Lance O'Donnell

Tuesday of Advent 1

3 December, A.D. 2024

JANUARY 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
5:00 am Divine Worship 8:00 am Divine Worship 9:15 am Sunday School 9:15 am Public School Confirmation 9:15 am Adult Bible Study 10:30 am Divine Worship 7:00 pm HS Youth Group	6:00 pm Lord's Cupboard Drive-Thru 6:00 pm Lord's Lambs Giveaway	7:00 am Board of Operations Mtg 6:00 pm Board of Elders Mtg	8:00 am Warrior Classic 11:00 am Caring Through Sharing Group	9:00 am Warrior Classic 6:30 pm Praise Team Rehearsal	10:00 am Warrior Classic 1:00 pm New Member Sponsor Cmte Mtg	11:00 am Warrior Classic 7:30 am Journeymen 5:00 pm Divine Worship 8:30 pm AA Meeting
8:00 am Divine Worship 9:15 am Sunday School 9:15 am Public School Confirmation 9:15 am Adult Bible Study 10:30 am Divine Worship 5:30 pm MS Youth Group 7:00 pm HS Youth Group	6:00 pm Lord's Lambs Giveaway	5:30 pm Board of Operations Mtg 5:30 pm Board of Elders Mtg	6:30 am Warrior Classic	7:30 am Church Choir Rehearsal 6:30 pm Church Choir Rehearsal 7:30 pm Praise Team Rehearsal	7:30 am Warrior Classic	8:00 am Journeymen 5:00 pm Divine Worship 8:30 pm AA Meeting
8:00 am Divine Worship 9:15 am Coffee Fellowship Hour 9:15 am Sunday School 9:15 am Public School Confirmation 9:15 am Adult Bible Study 10:30 am Divine Worship 11:45 am Youth Group Tubing at Sunburst 5:00 pm Reformation Tap Society	NO SCHOOL 5:30 pm Lord's Cupboard Drive-Thru & Meal	5:30 pm CLT Meeting	6:30 am Warrior Classic	7:30 am Church Choir Rehearsal 6:30 pm Praise Team Rehearsal	7:30 am Warrior Classic	8:00 am Journeymen 5:00 pm Divine Worship 8:30 pm AA Meeting
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JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

January 1st
Joanne Abel

January 3rd
Donna Fortmann

January 8th
Dale Swenson

January 10th
Pat Benes
Diane Bleke

January 12th
James Abel
Barb Boldt
Kathy Mueller

January 13th
Charles Muecke

January 16th
Robert Reddelien

January 17th
Tom Miller

January 19th
Wayne Schoenherr

January 21st
Michael Duffy

January 22nd
Duke Maynard

January 23rd
Barb Allwardt

January 26th
Barb Brockway

For our members 70+ years



MEMORIALS

Fred Boldt

\$100

**ST. PAUL'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
CHURCH AND SCHOOL**

(The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod)

210 E. Pleasant Street

Oconomowoc, WI 53066-3050

262-567-5001

WORSHIP & STUDY

Saturday Worship 5:00 pm

Sunday Worship 8:00 am & 10:30 am

Bible Class 9:15 am

Pastor Lance Armstrong O'Donnell 262.567.5001 x217

Pastor Jason Schockman 262.567.5001 x216

Director of Parish Music, Allison Mackie 262.567.5001 x214

Principal - Jill George 262.567.5001 x213

Website: www.splco.org

LIVE BROADCASTS:

8:00 am Sunday Worship

Live on WTKM 104.9 FM/1540 AM

& www.wtkm.com

Live-streamed at www.splco.org

EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER (ECC)

Christian Pre-School & Day Care

Director Christine Flores 262.567.4881

Epistle Editor-Heather Scheuer

Newsletter deadline for articles,
announcements and features is the
2nd Wednesday of the month

PLEASE ADVISE THE CHURCH OFFICE OF
ANY ADDRESS CHANGES



Piggly Wiggly Receipt fundraiser

If you shop at Piggly Wiggly, please deposit your receipts in the designated box in Fellowship Hall. The money raised from your receipts helps to continue the programming for our youth.

January Events

January 5 th	HS Youth Group (7-8:30pm)
January 8 th -11 th	Girls' Warrior Classic
January 12 th	MS Youth Group (5:30-7pm); HS Youth Group (7-8:30pm)
January 15 th -18 th	Boys' Warrior Classic
January 19 th	Tubing at Sunburst (MS and HS) after the 10:30am service
January 26 th	MS Youth Group (5:30-7pm); HS Youth Group (7-8:30pm)

NOVEMBER MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

Baptisms

Alanna Sue, daughter of Stephan & Megan Gieschen
 Emery Grace, daughter of Brent & Brooke (Thompson) Leiterman

Released from membership

Bruce & Tracy Bain
 Eric & Donna Groenke
 David & Michelle Schlomer, Vivian, Lloyd, Brigitte and Jack Binder

Deaths

Donald Groose
 Frederick Boldt

Baptized 1993 Confirmed 1202

REFORMATION TAP SOCIETY

Theology and conversation with a bit of hops.



*ADULTS 18 AND OLDER

January 19

In Your Presence There is Fullness of Joy:

How Church Buildings Confess the Joy of Christ

Presenter: Dave Juhl

First time guests
 get a free
 beer or soda on us!

5:00-7:00 pm
 @ BrewFinity

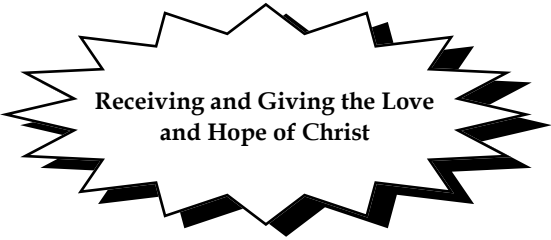
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WOULD YOU LIKE TO SPONSOR A RADIO BROADCAST?



Our radio broadcast over WTKM is a very important outreach for our congregation. Below are the dates open for 2025. Please prayerfully consider sponsoring one of these Sundays. The cost is \$125.00. We praise God for this valuable community outreach.

Jan. 26	Mar. 9	May 4	Jun. 22	Aug. 24	Oct. 19	Nov. 27
Feb. 2	Mar. 16	May 18	Jun. 29	Sept. 7	Oct. 26	Nov. 30
Feb. 9	Mar. 30	Jun. 1	Jul. 13	Sept. 14	Nov. 2	Dec. 7
Feb. 16	Apr. 6	Jun. 8	Jul. 20	Sept. 21	Nov. 16	Dec. 28
Mar. 2	Apr. 27	Jun. 15	Aug. 10	Oct. 12	Nov. 23	

If you are interested in sponsoring a Broadcast please fill out the bottom portion of this page and hand it into the church office. Thank you. Any questions please call Heather in the church office 567-5001.

NAME _____ DATE: 1st CHOICE _____ 2nd CHOICE _____

Please dedicate to (i.e. in memory of, wedding anniversary, to the Glory of God, in honor of...etc.)
