

DECEMBER EPISTLE

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

DECEMBER 2025

Through the Eyes of a Child



There is a wonderful sense of excitement in the ECC as December approaches and the children begin to anticipate the joy of Christmas. You can feel the sparkle in the air. Every twinkling light, every carol sung in harmony and every small surprise holds a sense of wonder and cheer.

As December unfolds, our hearts naturally turn toward the story of Christmas - a story of hope, love, joy and the miraculous gift of God with us. And yet, this season often carries a rush of activity as we zoom through traffic: the shopping lists, decorating, programs, and gatherings near and far. Throughout all of the festive preparations, it can be easy for us as adults to lose sight of the simple wonder at the heart of the birth of Jesus.

Seeing Christmas through the eyes of a child... Children, from even the littlest, can so often teach adults such wonderful (& vital) lessons. There is a certain magic in the way a child greets the lights of Advent, the cheer in a carol, the joy of a nativity pageant, or the anticipation of Christmas morning. Their wonder is not manufactured, their wonder is not imitated. Instead, the wonder is instinctive, genuine, and pure. In the eyes of a child, even from the littlest, the world sparkles a little brighter and the story of Jesus our Savior's birth feels immediate, and alive.

Jesus himself invited children into the center of faith, saying, "Let the little children come to me" (Matthew 19:14). He saw in them the very qualities He calls us all to embrace: trust, openness, and joy. During this season, we are reminded that Christmas is not only about our traditions or preparations, the lists or the decorating, but about experiencing God's love with hearts full of awe - hearts that see miracles in the ordinary and hope in the simplest of gifts.

Perhaps this year, we can let the children in our lives lead us in the celebration. Let us watch how they marvel at the glow of Christmas lights, how they sing with often out of tuned, unrestrained joy, how their laughter fills the church and school with the sounds of heaven. Their wonder ever reminding us that the birth of Jesus is still a miracle, not a story of the past, but a living promise: Emmanuel, God with us!

As we journey through Advent into Christmas, may we embrace the season with the openness and sparkle of a child. Let us pause, look closely, listen carefully, love whole heartedly — and allow the joy and wonder of children to awaken in us the true spirit of Christmas.

May your hearts, like those of our little ones, be ready to receive the greatest gift of all.

"But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.'" (Luke 2: 10-11)

Gratitude & Blessings,
Becca Zellmer

OCTOBER MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

Baptism

Matthew Damion Hopkins

Received by affirmation of faith

Robert Gerdes

Elizabeth Knea

Deaths

Robert Buchta

Alexander Knebel

Baptized 2026 Confirmed 1246



REMINDER

Due to the Oconomowoc Christmas Parade, our worship service on Saturday, December 6th, will take place at 3pm. Please make a note of it.

December's Hymn of the Month: *Prepare the Royal Highway*

(number 343 in *Lutheran Service Book*)



This hymn was written by Frans Mikael Franzén, a Lutheran pastor in the Church of Sweden in the early nineteenth century. Franzén was part of a committee to produce a new hymnal for the Church of Sweden. Franzén and another pastor on the committee published a volume of trial hymns for the new hymnal, including "Prepare the Royal Highway." After feedback on early drafts, an edited version of the hymn was included in the official hymnal in 1819 and gained popularity throughout the Scandinavian countries.

The opening stanza is based on a passage from Isaiah, "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God" (Isaiah 40:3). The second and third stanzas tie this imagery to Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, when the people greeted Him with adoration fitting a King. However, the final stanza reminds us that Jesus' kingdom is a heavenly one and that His rule will have no end.

During the Advent season, we remember and celebrate the Messiah's first coming, but also look forward to and prepare for His final coming when he will reign over His people in His perfect kingdom forever.



Journeymen/Denny Zastrow Christmas Sing-A-Long

The Journeymen/Denny Zastrow Christmas Sing-a-Long will take place on Saturday, December 13th, starting at 7:30am. We meet at Maxim's at the Depot in downtown Oconomowoc. All men of the congregation are invited.

Sisters in Service

Sisters in Service, make sure to mark your calendars for our Christmas party being held on Thursday, December 4th, at 5:30pm. *Johnny Pizzas & Pastaria* is the location for the evening's festivities. Don't forget to scour your homes for that special White Elephant gift, wrapped and ready to exchange that evening. So, please join us on December 4th, to start the celebration of this year's wonderful Christmas Season.

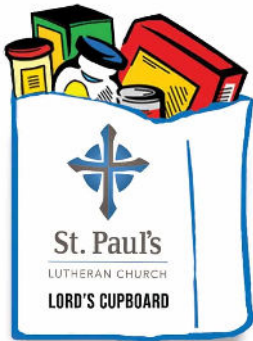


St. Paul's LWML will be providing the December 3rd Advent supper. The menu will be soups, salad, bread and desserts.

The SWD LWML Winter Getaway at the Radisson Hotel in Fond du Lac is January 30-31, 2026. It's not too late to register. The theme is God is with You-Be Strong and Courageous. Information can be found on the SWD LWML website. Forms are available by the LWML bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall. Registration deadline is January 16th.

Join us for our next meeting, Tuesday, December 2nd, at 6:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. We will have our annual Christmas devotion and fellowship time with goodies. Everyone is invited to join us! We will not meet in January.

ST. PAUL'S OCONOMOWOC



FOOD PANTRY

The Lord's Cupboard is thankful, grateful and blessed!

We want to thank everyone who bought delicious food at the Chocolate Factory on November 20th. We received 25% of the sales from 4-8pm and we will be receiving a \$600 check!

And thank you to everyone who went online daily from November 5th-21st to Carew Cares and voted for Lord's Cupboard. This was a contest between 3 area food pantries-Lord's Cupboard, Jefferson Area Food Pantry and Sunshine Reach in Lake Mills that Carew Heating & A/C in Watertown did to give back to the community. Fantastic news-LC won the top prize of \$1500!

Thank you so much for your participation in either or both fundraisers.

December 2025



MITES

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Have you started baking cookies yet? Yes 10¢ No- 15¢	2 Going to LWML tonight? Yes-15¢ No-30¢	3 50¢ if you did NOT attend Advent service today	4 John of Damascus* Theologian & Hymnwriter 25¢	5 Do you celebrate St. Nick? Yes 20¢ No-40¢	6 NICHOLAS OF MYRA* Pastor 25¢
7 AMBROSE OF MILAN* Pastor/Hymnwriter 20¢	8 5¢ for each red or green item you wore today	9 LWML meets tonight Going-15¢ Not-25¢	10 Snowflakes today? 5¢	11 5¢ for each Christmas card you will send	12 5¢ for each dozen of cookies baked so far	13 LUCIA* Martyr 25¢
14 Third Sunday in Advent 30¢	15 Bought a coffee today-50¢ Made your own-15¢	16 Christmas cards sent? Yes-10¢ No-20¢	17 DANIEL THE PROPHET* and the 3 Young Men 15¢	18 Cereal for breakfast? Hot-10¢ Cold-15¢	19 ADAM & EVE* 20¢	20 KATARINA von BORA LUTHER* 30¢
21 ST THOMAS APOSTLE 50¢	22 ALL Christmas gifts wrapped? Yes-25¢ No-50¢	23 Sunny today? Yes-30¢ No-15¢	24 5¢ for each person in your family attending services today	25 MERRY CHRISTMAS CHRIST IS BORN! \$1	26 ST STEPHEN Martyr 30¢	27 ST. JOHN Apostle & Evangelist 40¢
28 THE HOLY INNOCENTS Martyrs 30¢	29 DAVID* 25¢	30 Had eggs for breakfast? Yes-15¢ No-15¢	31 EYE OF THE CIRCUMCISION & NAME OF JESUS \$1			
		*Commemoration Days				

MITES MAY BE RETURNED in the Large Mite Box in Narthex. Additional Mite Boxes for personal use are also available.

*Commemoration Days are examples of those in whom the saving work of Jesus Christ has been made manifest to the glory of His holy name and to the praise of His grace and mercy

DECEMBER 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
7 8:00 am Divine Worship 9:10 am Sunday School 9:15 am Public School Confirmation 9:15 am Adult Bible Study 10:30 am Divine Worship 12:00 pm Special Voters' Meeting 7:00 pm HS Youth Group	8 6:00 pm Lord's Lambs Giveaway	9 5:30 pm Board of Operations Meeting 6:00 pm Board of Elders Mtg.	10 11:00 am Caring Through Sharing 12:15 pm Advent Worship 5:00 pm Advent Supper 5:15 pm Advent Hymn Sing 6:30 pm Advent Worship	11 1:00 pm New Member Sponsor Committee Mtg. 6:30 pm Church Choir Practice 7:30 pm Praise Team Practice	12	13 7:30 am Journeymen Christmas Sing-a-Long 9:00 am Packing Christmas Food Bags 5:00 pm Divine Worship
14 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 Deliver Christmas Food Bags 1:00 pm All Youth Christmas Party	15 5:30 pm Lord's Cupboard Christmas Food Bags/Meal	16 9:00 am SPLS Children's Christmas Service 5:30 pm SPLS Children's Christmas Service	17 12:15 pm Advent Worship 5:00 pm Advent Supper 6:15 pm Advent Hymn Sing 8:30 pm Advent Worship	18 6:30 pm Church Choir Practice 7:30 pm Praise Team Practice	19	20 8:00 am Women of Joy Bible Study 5:00 pm Divine Worship
21 8:00 am Divine Worship 9:10 am Sunday School 9:15 am Public School Confirmation 9:15 am Adult Bible Study 10:30 am Divine Worship 5:00 pm Reformation Tap Society 7:00 pm HS Youth Group	22 NO SCHOOL 6:00 pm Lord's Lambs Giveaway	23 NO SCHOOL OFFICE CLOSED	24 NO SCHOOL OFFICE CLOSED 3:00 pm Songs of Christmas 5:00 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight 8:00 pm Christmas Midnight (obs)	25 NO SCHOOL OFFICE CLOSED 10:00 am Christmas Day Worship	26 NO SCHOOL OFFICE OPEN 9-12	27 7:30 am Journeymen 5:00 pm Divine Worship
28 8:00 am Divine Worship 10:30 am Divine Worship	29 NO SCHOOL OFFICE CLOSED	30 NO SCHOOL OFFICE CLOSED	31 NO SCHOOL OFFICE CLOSED			



Advent & Christmas

Worship Opportunities

Midweek Advent Worship

Wednesdays: December 3, 10 and 17

12:15pm & 6:30pm (hymn sing at 6:15pm)

A meal will precede the evening service at 5pm
(free-will offering)

Children's Christmas Service

Tuesday: December 16

9am & 5:30pm

Christmas Eve

3pm: Songs of Christmas

5pm: Christmas Eve Candlelight

8pm: Christmas Midnight

Christmas Day

10am: The Nativity of Our Lord





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.

Information about the MS & HS youth group is available through:

- Email: splyouth.group@splco.org
- Instagram: splyouthocon

December Events

- † December 7 High School Youth Group 7pm - 8:30pm
- † December 10 HOLIDAY TRAIN 3-8:30pm
 - ★ If you're planning to volunteer, please attend the 12:15 midweek Advent service that day.
- † December 14 Deliver Christmas food bags 11:45am-1pm
- † ALL YOUTH CHRISTMAS PARTY
- † December 21 NO YOUTH GROUP
- † December 28 NO YOUTH GROUP



St. Paul's

OCONOMOWOC

splco.org

Special Voters' Meeting **December 7, 2025** **12:00 pm in the Church**

AGENDA

Mission: Receiving and giving the love and hope of Christ

- A. Call to Order
- B. Opening Devotion
- C. Approval of Agenda
- D. Teacher Call Committee: Motion to Call a 4th Grade Teacher
 - 1. Discussion
 - 2. Vote
- A. Adjournment
- B. Closing Prayer

Advent Meals



The Advent meals will be served prior to our evening midweek Advent Worship services. The meals will be served in the Fellowship Hall from 5:00-6:15pm. Below are the dates of the meals.

Wednesday, December 3rd: Sponsored by LWML

Menu: Soup, salad and desserts

Wednesday, December 10th: Sponsored by the Church Leadership Team

Menu: Pulled pork sandwiches, sides and desserts

Wednesday, December 17th: Sponsored by the Board of Operations

Menu: Soup, salad and desserts

FAREWELL FROM BARB ALLWARDT

I was hired to teach at St. Paul's in 1976. At that time, we were celebrating the 100th year anniversary of the school. Now, we are about to celebrate the 150th anniversary. To be part of this ministry has been truly a blessing. Now, all my past students are adults—many being parents and some even grandparents.

When I was hired, women who graduates from a Lutheran Teachers' College were not allowed to be "CALLED as Ministers of the Word", but were, instead, CONTRACTED. A male teacher, with the same amount of experience, was paid more than a female teacher. AND, St. Paul's Church did not allow females to be voting members of the congregation. In other words, I came to serve St. Paul's in the "Stone Age"! 😊

Even so, I have been truly blessed and honored to serve God here at St. Paul's. By the time you read this, I will have moved to Florida. I am taking this opportunity to say "good-bye" to all of you that I have gotten to know throughout these many years. I have truly enjoyed seeing many of my past students in different situations. I have worked with some of them and played ball with others. One of them was actually my doctor and operated on me twice. If I would have decided to continue to live here, one of them would have been my mortician. It has not been unusual to bump into a past students in my daily life. Just the other day, I had a nice talk with one of them at the Ixonia Dump. To "catch up" with a past student and find out how he/she is doing is such a joy!

In my 34 years of teaching, I have been part of a terrific faculty. There have been many great principals, secretaries, custodians and pastors. It is a rare occupation where all of your fellow employees are Christians.

I have been blessed with the friendship of many other church members, as well. I want to tell you that you have given me such joy and many good memories. We have shared our thoughts and concerns, as well as enjoyed many good laughs and fun! You have been part of my prayers and concerns. I will miss you and ask God to continue to strengthen you in your journey here on this earth. May you always be a light in His world to those around you. I look forward to seeing you in our final home in Heaven.

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Dawn Wellsfry
December 3rd

Elaine Schmeda
December 4th

Jean Fisher

Vicki Walterman
December 9th

Mary Weber
December 11th

William Anderson

Gary Flanagan
Donald Schmitt
December 12th

Tom Krenzke
Richard Thurow
December 13th

Mary Ann Ashworth

Lois Gauerke
December 14th

Carol Allen
December 16th

Jan Muecke
December 18th

Arlene Holzhuetter
December 19th

Frieda Antoniak
December 20th

Allen Wiroll
December 24th

Mary Lou Pagenkopf
December 25th

Mary Bojko
Dale Hesse
December 29th

For our members 70+ years



MEMORIALS

Robert Buchta	\$275.00
Wendy Wincell	\$100.00
Ralph Andrus	\$150.00

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

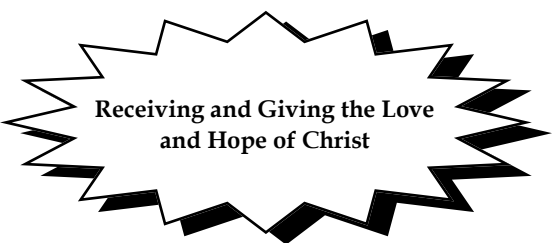
Newsletter deadline for articles,
announcements and features is the
2nd Wednesday of the month

PLEASE ADVISE THE CHURCH OFFICE OF
ANY ADDRESS CHANGES

St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church, School & ECC
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Oconomowoc, WI 53066-3050

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Website: www.splco.org

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**REFORMATION
TAP SOCIETY**
Theology and conversation
with a bit of hops.

Reformation Tap Society talks are casual and thoughtful adult conversations about important things. *Under the theme, "Lead Me to Christ, the Rock," the 2025-2026 Reformation Tap Society season explores the various ways in which Christ is the foundation of a holy and purposeful life.* Though we welcome adults of any age, topics and language are aimed at those 18-35. Our speakers understand that RTS is a public event, so the conversation won't be raw, but our speakers are encouraged to practice candor geared towards younger adults. Parents of children under high school age should collaborate on a babysitter, then come and enjoy the beverages, food, and conversation. RTS is an opportunity to hear perspectives not regularly heard in popular culture. All are welcome.

RTS is held on the 3rd Sundays, September through May. We gather at 5pm, have a "beer talk" from the brewmaster at about 5:25, and at about 5:30 our speaker takes the mic. The speaker will present on a topic of interest, then take questions until 6:15 or so. (BTW, you're welcome even if you're not a beer fan. Other beverages are available.)

December 21, 2025

Keep Christ in Christianity

Presenter: Aaron Moldenhauer

5-7p.m.

BrewFinity Brewery
N58W38900 Industrial Rd.
Suite D
Oconomowoc, WI 53066
www.brewfinitybrewing.com

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