



St. Paul Lutheran Church

The Church on the Highway

Loving others into the Love of Christ

January 2024 Edition

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A Message From Our Senior Pastor

Rev. Dr. Brian Hesse

Email: pastorhesse@splcwaco.com

A Year of Saints!

In the front of our hymnal, The Lutheran Service Book, there is a couple of pages that barely get any notice. On pages x-xiii (the roman numerated pages in the front) you will find the church calendar. In addition to seasons of the year such as Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent and Pentecost, this calendar provides the dates of special festivals and commemorations of important people in the church. Each and every month of the year the church celebrates various saints who have walked in faith and provided for us an example of Godly living.

The book of Hebrews says, "Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the Word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith." (Hebrews 13:7) This encouragement comes after the same book of Scripture says, "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:1-2)

The most important saint you will discover in God's Word is you! Every example in Scripture, every saint put before us reminds us that God desires you to join them in faith he provides. In learning about the saints, we can learn about our own faith. Therefore in 2024, this newsletter will share with the story of a saint for the month. In learning these stories, we can grow in our own faith. In learning their stories, we are enabled to continue our own story of faith.

Want more than what you can get from these short newsletter articles? Each Wednesday Senior's Worship we will also share the story of our saint of the month. You can consider it a bonus opportunity to learn of the deep and rich history of faith that God provides to us. Unlike our Roman Catholic friends, we won't be praying to the saints. We certainly won't be worshipping these saints either. We will spend 2024 growing in our faith by learning from the faith of the others that have been before us.

A blessed Happy New Year to all of you as we eagerly embrace every blessing that our God may have in store for us. Welcome to another year of being God's most precious saint.



Sunday Worship

8am & 10:30am

Online: www.splcwaco.com

Bible Class/Sunday School

9:15am



A Message From Our Deaconess

Dcs. Suzanne Krahn

Email: dcskrahn@splcwaco.com

Loneliness

Loneliness is a transient emotional state that can affect your mental and physical health if it is not recognized and dealt with early. It's an unpleasant feeling that can leave you feeling isolated and yearning for connection and intimacy. Loneliness is associated with an increased risk of other mood disorders like depression and anxiety, including stress and sleep issues. It can increase the risk of high blood pressure, heart disease, and stroke. Older adults who feel socially isolated are at an increased risk of dementia. Some researchers are urging healthcare professionals to treat loneliness as a public health issue. The researchers have found it to be a global problem. Researchers analyzed 113 countries and territories from 2000 to 2019. Many mental health experts fear the problem has gotten worse since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Experts are saying social isolation and loneliness are different. Loneliness is a feeling of being alone, while with social isolation there is a lack of social connection to others.

The elderly typically are more at risk, but teens are as well. In the mid-20's and 40's people seem to have a lesser risk, but once they are over 50 the risk increases again. Dealing with loneliness early helps a person before it gets worse.

There are different degrees of loneliness:

Acute = situational and short term

Chronic = long term and other causes

Loneliness differs from anxiety (fear of social contact) and depression (multi-faceted mental health condition). Chronic loneliness – people struggle with core beliefs of not being worthy of friendship or love, or feeling they don't even exist.

Ways to cope with loneliness include:

1. Talk it out with a close friend, relative, or professional listener.
2. Be around animals, especially dogs.
3. Explore new hobbies and activities or pursue old interests again.
4. Volunteer at a shelter or care facility.
5. Make sure you're not depressed.
6. Take a break from social media.

Being alone is not the same as being lonely. You could be in a crowd and still feel alone. Look at your loneliness in a different way by having an opportunity for self-discovery, creative thought, or self-reflection. Practice gratitude. Enjoy the simple things in life and your surroundings. Fill the house with music or white noise, or open a window. Spend quality time with loved ones and friends. Enjoy the outdoors. Do something you care about. Remind yourself it's not forever. People change as they age and attitudes and feelings change also. Don't be afraid to seek professional help.

Biblically speaking: We are never alone, Christ Himself told us this. Matt. 28:20 *"And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

May the Lord Jesus Christ be in your hearts always.

Written by: 6 authors from Healthline.com

Resources:

- <https://www.healthline.com/health/mental-health/how-not-to-feel-lonely>
- <https://www.healthline.com/health/loneliness-and-depression>
- <https://www.healthline.com/health-news/loneliness-can-affect-you-mentally-and-physically>
- <https://www.healthline.com/health-news/how-loneliness-differs-from-anxiety>
- <https://www.healthline.com/health/mental-health/loneliness-changes-across-lifetime>
- <https://www.healthline.com/health/social-media-loneliness>

New Offering Envelopes

The Offering Envelope Process:

Step 1: Envelopes

Please use the *WHITE* envelopes for regular giving or the *BLUE* envelopes for special giving (ie: Memorials, Endowment Fund, etc.).

Blank envelopes are always available in the Narthex, the Albers Family Life Center and by the member mailboxes. In the interest of being good stewards and minimizing waste, we will no longer distribute boxed offering envelopes. You can grab a new envelope each week, or take a handful of envelopes to keep at home or in your car.

Step 2: Name/Number Label Stickers

Affix your mini-label sticker (they are provided to you) to an offering envelope.

Step 3: What if I run out of label stickers?

No problem! Just check the box on the white envelope: "I need more stickers" and we will provide them through your church mailbox.


Step 4: What about Special Holidays and Seasons?

Special envelopes for Advent, Lent, and other holidays will be available in the Narthex, the Albers Family Life Center and by the member mailboxes.

Step 5: What about Memorials and Other Gifts?

When you desire to make an offering or gift that is over and above your regular giving, please use the *BLUE* envelopes. Affix your mini-label sticker to the blue envelope and check the box(es) for the appropriate designation for your gift.

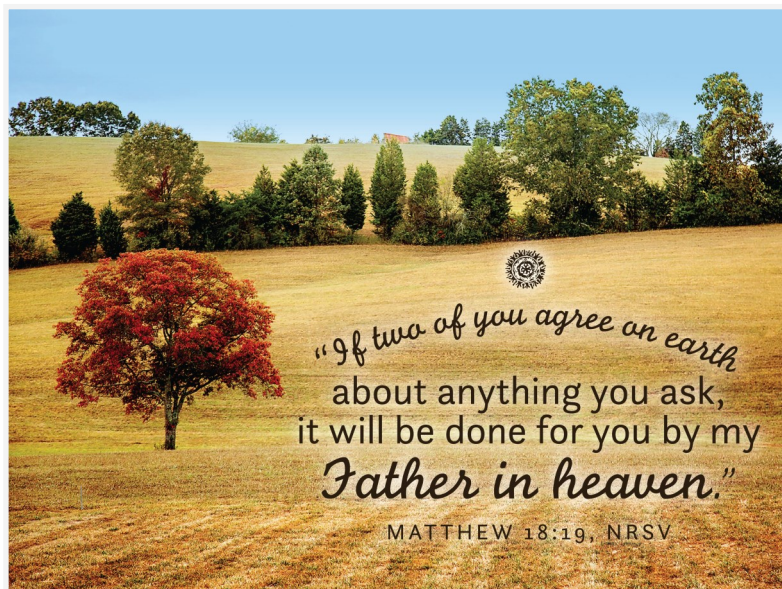
**If you have any questions about this new process,
please feel free to call or stop by the church office.**

 <p>St. Paul Lutheran Church The Church on the Highway Leading others into the Love of Christ 1301 Hogan Lane Waco, Texas 76705</p>	<div style="border: 2px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;">Place Sticker Here</div>	OR	Envelope #: _____	Weekly Offering Envelope
Name: _____				
Date: _____	Address: _____			
Amt: \$ _____	_____			
<input type="checkbox"/> Check box to order more stickers!	_____			

Please Remember in Your Prayers:

- † We pray for continued healing for all those who have suffered physical problems in the last month, including: (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord lay His healing hand upon them.
- † We pray for those on hospice care, including: (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord provide them comfort and peace.
- † We pray for all who are undergoing cancer diagnosis/treatment, including: (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord keep His healing hand upon them.
- † We pray for all who struggle with ongoing health concerns, including: (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord keep His healing hand upon them.
- † We pray for all who are home-bound, including: (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord give them comfort and peace with their living situation.
- † We pray for all those in nursing care or assisted/independent living facilities, including: (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord will give them comfort and peace with their living situation.
- † We pray for those who have lost loved ones in the last month; including: (a complete list is available through the church office). May God grant peace and comfort to these families, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
- † We pray for those serving in our Armed Forces (a complete list is available through the church office). We pray the Lord keep them safe in their stead as they defend our freedom and safety.

Please contact the church office if you, someone in your family, or a family friend is in need of prayer. Please keep the church office advised of the status of those you add to the prayer list, so that our list remains up-to-date. If you have any questions, please contact the church office at 254.799.3211 or by email to: wecare@splcwaco.com.



Servants for January 2024

ACOLYTES:

1/7 D Sterriker (8:00am)
C Gonzalez (10:30am)
1/14 M Schmedthorst (8:00am)
E Tindle (10:30am)
1/21 K Gerik (8:00am)
E Williams (10:30am)
1/28 D Sterriker (8:00am)
L Breton (10:30am)

LAY READERS

1/7 B Luedke (8:00am)
J Uptmore (10:30am)
1/14 T Albers (8:00am)
D Galler (10:30am)
1/21 J Nawara (8:00am)
M Weaver (10:30am)
1/28 K Rogers (8:00am)
K Shelton (10:30am)

ELDER OF THE MONTH:

J Lehrmann

USHERS FOR WORSHIP

8am Worship: Group 3
10:30am Worship: Group 4

SUNDAY MORNING GREETERS:

1/7 J Nawara (8:00am)
J Kersten (10:30am)
1/14 B & P Schulze (8:00am)
B & T Holobaugh (10:30am)
1/21 S & M Leuschner (8:00am)
J Hahn (10:30am)
1/28 P Dieterich/S Shaeffer (8:00am)
K Goolsby (10:30am)

ALTAR FLOWERS:

1/7 D & K Schwarz
1/14 OPEN
1/21 OPEN
1/28 F & D Kubitza

NURSERY VOLUNTEERS

1/7 L Wolfe (9:15am)
S Cone (10:30am)
1/14 J Lassetter (9:15am)
P & K Gravitt (10:30am)
1/21 M & B Gerik (9:15am)
J Uptmore (10:30am)
1/28 S Payne (9:15am)
K & H Lindsay (10:30am)



The BEACON Committee will begin preparing/serving breakfast to the clients for My Brother's Keeper, a chronic emergency homeless shelter associated with Mission Waco that is centered around the biblical mandate to care for our fellow man. We are scheduled to serve on the second

Wednesday of each month, beginning on Jan. 10, 2024. Volunteers should arrive at the Meyer Center kitchen (12th and Washington Ave.) by 6:00 a.m. to cook, serve, then clean up and be finished around 8:00 a.m. There will be 25-30 people attending breakfast each month. If you have any questions, please contact Beth Hassell (number available in the church office).

**The Church Office will be closed on
Monday, January 1, 2024.**

**We will return to normal office hours
(Mon.-Thurs. 7am-4:30pm and Fri. 8am-noon)
on Tuesday, Jan. 2, 2024.**





During our Senior Adults Fellowship Lunch Wednesday, January 10, 2024, we will have a special presentation by St. Paul member, Mallory Wortman, on fraud, and scam alerts. Mallory is a Senior Financial Crimes Investigator specializing in anti-money laundering, elder financial exploitation, human trafficking investigations, fraud, and identity theft protection. She is a certified anti-money laundering specialist (CAMS) and a certified financial crime specialist (CFCS). Mallory holds a Master of Legal Studies in Risk Management and Compliance from Texas A&M University School of Law. Please make plans to join us for worship (with Holy Communion) at 11:00 a.m. that morning and stay for a wonderful lunch (desserts to be shared are appreciated but not required). If you have any questions, please call the church office.



Please mark your calendars and plan to attend our worship services on Sunday, January 14, 2024 when Natalie Ortiz-Lovince will be joining St. Paul to tell us about the mission and work of Tri-Cities Ministries (TCM), a nonprofit organization that is officed and open to the public inside our church building. Natalie is the Executive Director of TCM and loves partnering with community members and faith leaders to serve and love our neighbors. TCM is dedicated to "Bridging Gaps; Building Community; and Bringing Good News." TCM opens its doors every Tuesday for residents of Bellmead, Lacy Lakeview and Elm Mott seeking emergency assistance with rent, utilities, food and other basic needs to come and meet with a team member for help and prayer. If you would like to learn more about TCM before then, please visit their website (www.tricitiesministries.org) or call (254.777.5229) to schedule a meeting.



LWML @ SPLC

New Year's Blessings from LWML. We would like to thank you profusely for helping make our mission projects possible last year. Your support of our bake sales and collections allowed us to bless Veterans One Stop and Lutheran World Relief. Your generous mite contributions have supported National and Texas LWML mission grants. **We are looking forward to 2024, our next mission projects and new members.** Please join us the second Wednesday of the month following the 11:00 a.m. Senior Adults Worship Service and lunch (we meet in the conference room at church). If you have any questions, or would like more information, please contact LWML President, Jacqueline Uptmore.



Top Row: T Albers, D Kubitz, P Dieterich
 2nd Row from the top: K Spross, J Uptmore
 3rd Row from the top: J Nawara, E Pareya, B Moss, N Hand
 Front row: S Krahn, L Wellman, N Banta, J Anundsen, S Neuhaus



SPIRITUAL CONVERSATION WORKSHOPS

Outreach Workshop
Saturday, February 17, 2024
9:00 a.m.
Albers Family Life Center

Please join us for lively workshops that present timely, practical tools that can equip you to become an effective witness for Jesus. Both workshops are based on original research from Barna and Lutheran Hour Ministries.

Lunch and all materials will be provided!

Please contact Linda Turnbough
 (254.749.3272)
 with any questions.



The 2023 giving statements will be prepared and placed in member mailboxes by January 31, 2024 (as required by state law).

Please note, we only track your donations via the offering envelopes or online giving; any loose checks or cash received in the offering plate are not entered.

If you have any questions, please see Board of Stewardship Chair, Mark Borchardt; or contact the church office.

?? ? **Bible Quiz** ? ??

In the story of the Magi, what word is used to give a sense of Jesus' age when the wise men visited? What does it tell us?

- A. "baby"; Jesus was still a newborn in a manger
- B. "child"; when the wise men visited, Jesus had grown past infancy
- C. "youth"; Jesus was probably between 10 and 14
- D. No word is used to suggest Jesus' age at the time of the wise men's visit.

Answer: B (See Matthew 2:1-12.)

Classes for All Ages

Please join us for Sunday School and Bible Classes at 9:15 a.m.

Adult Bible Study (Albers Family Life Center)

Join us for "Questions on The Gospel of Matthew" as we read through the first book of the New Testament.

Men's Bible Class (classroom behind the Parish Hall)

This class is studying, *The Messiah: Revealing Jesus in the Old Testament*. This Bible study works through all 39 books of the Old Testament and identifies crossovers between New Testament themes and ideas.

Ladies Bible Class (Conference Room)

This class is working through the study, *Promised Rest: Finding Peace in God's Promise*, by Michelle Diercks. As a Christian, you face the pressure and stressors of the world daily. You look for rest at every turn—rest from your job, family drama, personal struggles—but the only true rest can come from Christ. In this study you will find His promised rest by studying eight different names and characteristics of God.

Simply Loved, Nursery - Fourth Grade Students (classrooms)

Let's get back to the heart of what matters most! Simply help your kids love Jesus and each other. Every activity, song, and visual in Simply Loved is designed to help kids remember each lesson long after their children's ministry years. Simply Loved curriculum was created with the truth found in 1 John 4:7 in mind which says, 'Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God.'

XP3, Fifth - Eighth Grade Students (classrooms)

One Priority... "Love God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." *This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'* Matthew 22:37-38 This curriculum has three relational motives: Move kids to LOVE GOD by inciting Wonder; Move kids to LOVE LIFE by provoking discovery; and Move kids to LOVE OTHERS by fueling passion.

High School and College Students (Youth Room)

All high school and college students are invited to join in the Youth Room every Sunday for Bible Class! This will be a great time of study, building relationships, fellowship and fun! The class will be led by college students, Seth Randolph and Travis Elmore. If you have any questions, please see Pastor Hesse.

Other Bible Study Opportunities:

Dwell Youth Ministry

Dwell Youth Ministry will have an Epiphany Party on Sunday, January 7, 2024. We will meet in the Youth Room immediately following the 10:30 a.m. worship for pizza and fellowship. If you have any questions, please contact Vicar Fry (254.800.5999 or VicarFry@splcwaco.com).

College Student Evening Bible Study/Fellowship

This group meets on Monday evenings at 5:30 p.m. in the Rogers Engineering Building, room 207, at Baylor University. Please see Karen Shelton with any questions.

Ladies Bible Study Group in the Conference Room

This group meets in the Conference Room on the First and Third Wednesday of each month at 9:30 a.m. They are studying, "CHOSEN: A Study of Esther." In this study, see that God's presence is ever-abundant in your life, and that God gives you the courage to live fearlessly as Esther did. Learn the historical context of the Book of Esther to enrich your understanding of God's Word.

Youth Confirmation/Catechesis Training and Music (grades 5-8)

These classes meet every Wednesday. Students in grades 6-8 meet in the Youth Room at 6:30 p.m. with Pastor Hesse, and students in 5th grade meet at 6:00 p.m. in the Conference Room with Deaconess Krahn. If you have any questions, please see Pastor Hesse.

There's a place for EVERYONE to be immersed in God's Word and fellowship with other Christians!

Children & Youth Activities

Dwell Youth

EPIPHANY Party

Please scan the QR code below to
RSVP by Thursday, Jan. 4, 2024:



**An Epiphany Party is being planned for
Sunday, January 7, 2024.**

We will meet in the Youth Room immediately
following the 10:30 a.m. worship service for
pizza and fellowship.

Questions? Contact:

Vicar Rory Fry

Email: VicarFry@splcwaco.com



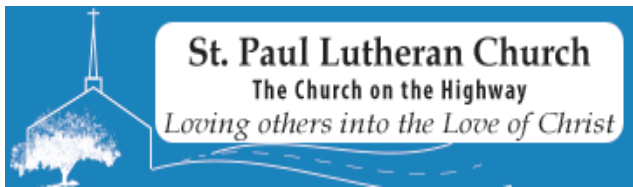
Details and registration information
will be available in late Spring!



IN THE WORKS

- ⇒ **Sunday, Jan. 7, 2024:** Youth Epiphany Pizza Party in the Youth Room, immediately following the 10:30 a.m. worship
- ⇒ **Sunday, February 25:** Sunday School Family (adults & kids) event. More details coming soon.
- ⇒ **Sunday, March 24** (Palm Sunday): Annual Easter Egg Hunt at 9:15 am. This will be a community event.
- ⇒ **Sunday, April 14:** Outing Event (plans being finalized).
- ⇒ **Sunday, June 23 – Wednesday, June 26:** VBS, 5:00 to 8:00 pm. Vacation Bible School.

If you have any questions, please contact the church office or see Angel Breton, Kimberly Vicha, Heather Hutchison, or Hannah Galler.



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Fax: 254.412.0529
www.splcwaco.com

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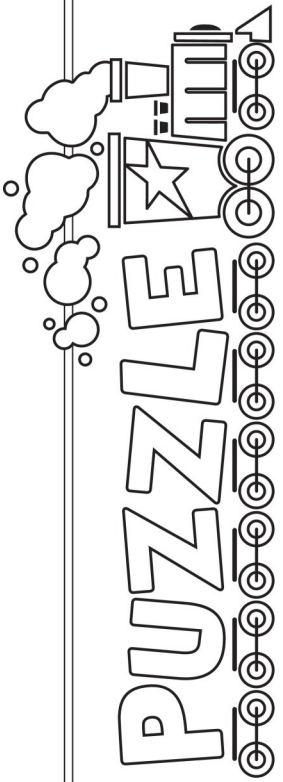
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PUZZLE

HAPPY NEW YOU!



Changing the calendar each January is a reminder that God makes all things new.

Directions: Use the clues and the calendar code to complete 2 Corinthians 5:17, ESV.

JANUARY 2024						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	God	night	word	in	love	Jesus
7		8	9	10	11	12
glory	therefore	speak	give	light	Christ	a
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
saw	beginning	anyone	waters	help	is	many
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
he	again	through	earth	made	while	back
28	29	30	31			
new	if	and	creation			



The second Monday _ _ _ _ _
The last Monday _ _
The 16th _ _ _ _ _
One day before the 20th _ _
The day before the first Friday _ _
The last weekday of the second week _ _ _ _ _
The day after the 20th _ _
The day after 18th _ _
The first day of the second weekend _ _
The last Sunday _ _ _ _ _
The last day of the month _ _ _ _ _



Answers: Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.