

The Messenger

St. Paul Lutheran Church

December, 2023



“We gather to worship, reach out and serve the Lord.”!

LUTHER ON PROTECTING AND NOT DESTROYING OUR NEIGHBOR

The Fifth Commandment: You shall not murder. What is this? OR What does this mean?



We are to fear and love God, so that we neither endanger nor harm the lives of our neighbors, but instead help and support them in all of life's needs.

The Eighth Commandment You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. What is this? OR What does this mean? We are to fear and love God, so that we do not tell lies about our neighbors, betray, or slander them, or destroy their reputations. Instead, we are to come to their defense, speak well of them, and interpret everything they do in the best possible light. Long before Fred Roger came a long, Luther saw in the commandments a call from God to find ways to live with our neighbors (neighbors being all of humanity). In the 5th and 8th commandments Luther heard a clarion call not only to not harm our neighbor but to protect our neighbor's life and name. In the Fifth commandment Luther calls us back to Luke 10:29 when Jesus is asked “Who then is my neighbor?” Jesus' answer comes in Luke 10:36 “Who was neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers? Jesus and the 5 th commandment change the question from “who is my Neighbor?”, to “what kind of neighbor am I?” The clarion call Luther points us to is that we are not to be neighbors who endanger or harm our neighbors

(humanity) in any way. There is a show on TV called “Neighborhood Wars”. The main issue seems to be that one neighbor or person has done some great wrong to another neighbor so that words and action leads to verbal and physical assault even to the point of death. Luther says God is calling us in our Fear (awe) and love of God to do everything to avoid endangering or harming them. However, Luther tells us it is not enough to just simply not do something but calls us to actions that lead us to help and support our neighbor (humanity) in all their life's needs. The Eighth commandments also ask “what kind of neighbor am I when it comes to our neighbor's name. Names are the core of our identity. When we lie betray or slander our neighbor, we destroy their identity and make their name “vain”, remember to make something vain is to make it nothing. However again Luther says in this commandment God is calling for more from us than just not destroying our neighbors name and reputation a kind of death, but to speak well of them defend them and see them in the kindest possible light. The sinful self, the devil, and the world will say this is Namby-Pamby stuff after all it is my life that is important it is my life and identity that I need

to protect. But God keep asking us this one question, “What kind of neighbor are you?”

Yours in Faith,
Pastor Wayne





LEO (Let's Eat Out) gathers St. Paul members and friends on the third Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. to enjoy dinner out. This month we will meet on Wednesday, Dec. 20 at 5:30 p.m. at Mario's!



We are renewing our food pantry donations for December! We are collecting **Canned meat (tuna or chicken), spaghetti, Ravioli and Chili**. Thanks for being the hands and feet of Jesus in our community!

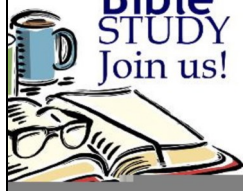
WELLNESS SUNDAY

Health and Wellness Sunday is the third Sunday of each month. Mary Leach or one of our parish nurses will be on hand before and after worship to check blood pressure, blood sugar, and to help with questions about your health.



REBECCA CIRCLE

The Rebecca Circle will meet on Thursday, December 21 at 11:30 am at Edinger's. Lunch will be followed by our meeting at the Church, which will include a devotional from Gather magazine entitled "God's Topsy-Turvy Kingdom". Volunteers may bring holiday goodies for sharing. All are welcome!



**Bible
STUDY**
Join us!

BIBLE STUDY AVAILABLE!

This book study helps us discover the difference in having a prayer life and living a praying life! Please join us on

Dec. 13 @ 6:00 pm at the church. Books are available on Amazon or contact Tami Putnam. "Live a Praying Life" by Jennifer Kennedy Dean

Please join us!

RED BAG OFFERING

We will continue with Red Bag collections on the 2nd Sunday of each month.

December- Local needy families



TEXT MESSAGES

If you would like to receive text messages with reminders and special announcements, please sign up for the St. Paul Texting Service by completing the following: Send a text to 81010

Text the message: @stpaul210





The Children's Christmas Program will be held during worship on Sunday, December 10. Please let Betsy Westergreen know if your child plans to participate. The children will be practicing their songs and lines during the normal Sunday School time



BIBLES AND BAGELS

Bibles and Bagels will meet on December 14 at 9:30 a.m. at Edinger's for breakfast and Bible study which will be based on the previous Sunday's gospel lesson. All are Welcome



If you have a confidential prayer request that you would like members of our church prayer chain to pray over, please contact Julie Mehlberg at jjmehlberg@gmail.com or call 815.848.6256. If you have a prayer request to be added to the worship service prayers, please sign the sheet on the office desk. St. Paul prayer partners stand ready to surround you with prayer!



Altar Flowers

If you would like to donate flowers in memory of or honor of someone, please sign your name on the flower chart located on the kiosk.

Flowers are \$25. Make checks payable to St. Paul Lutheran Church, noting "altar flowers" on the memo line. Thank you in advance for your donations.

Please pray for our members & friends:

Mark Leach, Doug Oliver, Steve & David McKinsey, Missionaries Tammy & Michael and Ruby Kramer.



Help make this season even brighter!

St Paul will be providing Christmas gifts for local children in need. If you would like to help, please sign up at the kiosk. Simply wrap and tag the gift with the first name, and bring it to church **by December 17th.**

Thank you so very much for all the love, prayers, and support we received at the passing of our mom, grandma, and great grandma. We appreciate and are so grateful for all the delicious food and help provided for the dinner.

The Family of Gladys Knudson

Sunday Pastoral Schedule

Dec. 3—Pastor Wayne Shelksohn

Dec. 10—SAM Marcia Buchs

Dec. 17—SAM Marcia Buchs

Dec. 24—Pastor Wayne Shelksohn

Dec. 31—SAM Marcia Buchs

Merry Christmas

DECEMBER CHURCH EVENTS

- ♦ Dec. 1—Church Xmas Decorating
- ♦ Dec. 4—Worship Team Meeting—10 am
- ♦ Dec. 9—Xmas Toy Closet—9-Noon
- ♦ Dec. 10—Childrens Christmas Program
- ♦ Dec. 10—Red Bag Offering (Local Needy Families)
- ♦ Dec. 11—Council Xmas Dinner—5:30 pm
- ♦ Dec. 13—Live a Praying Life—5:30 pm
- ♦ Dec. 14—Bibles & Bagels @ Edingers—9:30 am
- ♦ Dec. 18—Council Meeting—6 pm
- ♦ Dec. 20—LEO @ Mario's—5:30 pm
- ♦ Dec. 21—Rebecca Circle—11:30 am
- ♦ Dec. 24—Christmas Eve Service (6 pm)
- ♦ Dec. 27—Newsletter Deadline
- ♦ Dec. 31—Children's Anthem

Birthdays

Dec. 1—Tom Harms
Dec. 4—Tate Hendershott
Dec. 4—Ethan Schumm
Dec. 6—Jeffery Dixon
Dec. 15—Addie Folkerts
Dec. 15—Adam Girard
Dec. 20—Jim Russow
Dec/ 23—Marv Schlueter
Dec. 24—Dawn Boitnott
Dec. 27—Lucy Kehinde
Dec. 27—Tami Putnam
Dec. 28—Sam Lambert, Sr
Dec. 29—Jack Bristow
Dec. 29—Rosemary Sutton
Dec. 30—Cory Schott

St. Paul Lutheran Church

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[Facebook.com/stpaulpontiac](https://www.facebook.com/stpaulpontiac)

ANNIVERSARIES

Dec. 21 -Roger & Mary
Schuler

Dec. 23—Louis & Lucy
Kehinde

BULLETIN, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

Please send any announcements or articles to stpaulpontiac@gmail.com. Announcements for the bulletin are due by 9:00 Thursday mornings. The newsletter deadline for January will be Wednesday, December 27.