



2023

*Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.*

*What does this mean? We are to fear and love God so that we do not neglect his Word and the preaching of it, but regard it as holy and gladly hear and learn it.*

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Greetings! It is wonderful to see so many in church on Christmas. Yet many continue to lament because the attendance numbers are so low in comparison to the past. I've heard stories of the church being so full that they added chairs in the aisles. Obviously, that must have been before there were fire codes!

I recently stumbled across a writing by Martin Luther that laments of the same thing. Following the Reformation, people were not coming to receive the Lord's Supper, having been "relieved of the tyranny of the pope." Under the pope, those who failed to partake of the Lord's Supper would be excommunicated and cut off from God's grace, which could ultimately result in eternal condemnation. Unlike the pope, Luther believed that the church "must not force any to believe or to partake of the Lord's Supper; we must not make laws on this point or dictate time and place." Instead, he instructed pastors to preach in such a way that the people would command demand the sacrament. Luther writes,

*It is to be feared that he who does not desire to partake of the Lord's Supper at least three or four times during the year, apparently despises it, and that he is no Christian at all; just as he who refuses to believe and hear the Gospel is not a Christian.*

Luther explains that Christ did not say: "Neglect, or despise, this;" but he said, "Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." Christ commands that the sacrament shall be received by us. Jesus will not have it despised or neglected. He says, "Do this."

One who doesn't value most highly the Lord's Supper must not be troubled by sin, the flesh, the devil, death, danger, or hell, Luther says, though they are complete immersed in it. That same one must have "no need of mercy, of life, of paradise and the kingdom of heaven, of Christ and God, or of any good thing." For if such a person believed himself to be overwhelmed by evil and in need of blessings, he would not neglect the Lord's Supper because it gives effective remedy for evil and bestows abundant good. Such a person wouldn't need any law to force her to receive the sacrament, but would rush to receive it, propelled by her own need, and would urge her pastor to give her the sacrament immediately.

When I was an intern pastor, I visited a man who was left in constant nerve pain after a botched surgery on his face. I would bring the Lord's Supper to his home. During one of my visits, after preaching him the Gospel from Psalm 22, he nearly swiped everything off the side table in his haste to prepare room so that he could receive the body and blood of Christ. He knew his need for God's blessings. Christ himself was to be handed over to this man, with all Christ's benefits, and he would not allow anything to stand in the way.

When we receive the Lord's Supper, Christ takes upon himself everything that afflicts us: our nerve pain, our cancer, our heartbreak, our grief, our guilt, our shame. In exchange, he gives us his own righteousness, his own eternal life, his Father, a place with him in paradise, and a clear conscience that is at peace. He promises us that things will not always be like this. All our mourning, crying, and pain will one day find its end in Christ.

Don't let anything stand in your way but come and gather as one body on Sundays to receive Christ himself through Word and Sacrament. He will lift your burdens and give you his peace. See you in church!

In Christian love,  
Pr. Tricia Mattson

**St. Paul Lutheran Church  
Council Meeting - December 14, 2022  
7:45 p.m.**

Chairman Bill Vogel called the December meeting to order at 7:45 p.m. in Room 101. Members present were John Mueller, Angel Clemon, Bill Vogel, Jacob Marz, Randy Wendt, Tim Vogel and Jeff Krueger. Pastor Tricia was present via phone. Also present was Katie Mueller, Parish Coordinator and Anita Jensen, Financial Secretary. Sarah Groebner was absent.

Pastor led the group in a prayer.

M/S/P to approve the Secretary's minutes from the November meeting.

M/S/P to approve the Financial Report as printed. M/S/P to pay the November benevolence. The \$567.00 collected with the freewill offering at SW Minnesota Men's Chorus Concert on December 5 was given to the organization.

**Building and Grounds Report:**

- We are on the schedule for the new carpet to be installed for the lower north ramp entrance.

**Parish Education Report:**

- Sunday School Christmas Program is set for Sunday, December 18 at 10:00 a.m. Treat bags will be distributed to all the students following the program.
- The Augustana District Confirmation Retreat is set for March 3-5. in Alexandria, Minnesota. Cost is \$125 for each student and chaperone. M/S/P for the church to pay \$95 toward each student's fee and \$125 for each chaperone's fee. Chaperones will also be reimbursed for mileage.

**Pastor's Report:**

**Visitation**

- Visited with and gave Holy Communion to members in their homes, at nursing homes and at assisted living residences.

**Worship**

- Led worship with Holy Communion at The Maples on November 28, 2022.
- Led worship with Holy Communion at St.

John's Home on November 15, 2022.

- Presided at the funeral of David Schwartz at the American Legion on November 12, 2022.
- Led worship at Faith Community Lutheran Church in Slayton on November 12, 2022.
- Led worship at the Thanksgiving Service on November 23, 2022.
- Baptized Weston Steinhaus on December 11, 2022.

**Parish Education**

- Leading Bible Study at The Maples on Mondays at 3:00 p.m.
- Leading Bible Study on Tuesday evenings at 6:00 p.m.
- Teaching confirmation on Wednesday nights.
- Leading the Lutheran Difference Adult Study on Sundays at 10:10 a.m.
- Attended the Luther League meeting on December 7, 2022.

- Held a baptism class for the Steinhaus family on November 15, 2022.

**Community**

- Issued SAFE voucher to neighbors in need on November 21 and December 7, 2022.
- Led the assembly in Confession and Absolution at the Community Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service on November 20, 2022.
- Attended the St. John's Circle of Care Board Meeting on November 28, 2022.
- Attended the Kindergarten Christmas Program on December 5, 2022.
- Attended the SW Men's Chorus concert and helped serve desserts on December 5, 2022.
- Helped dress cast members at the Nativity Pageant on December 8-10, 2022.
- Attended the Springfield Band Concert on December 8, 2022.
- Attended the Jenniges Scholarship Trustee Meeting on December 9, 2022.

**Other**

- Singing with the Adult Choir.
- Helped decorate the sanctuary Christmas tree and chaperoned the Confirmation students on November 30, 2022.
- Attended the Budgeting Meeting on December 7, 2022.

**Continuing Education**

- Planning to attend the Augustana District Theological Conference in Bloomington February 6-7, 2023.
- Taking December 26 and December 27 off.
- Taking vacation January 17-23, 2023.

Old Business:

- Nominating Committee—Bill and John are working on securing names for open positions.
- The 2023 Budget was reviewed as set by the Budgeting Committee. It was pointed out that we would be paying for Al Groebner to take classes and obtain his boiler's license. Decided to eliminate the Zoom option from our telephone budget for next year.

New Business:

- Katie announced that all reports for the Annual Report are due by January 16, 2023 (except Anita).
- Auditing Committee—Jo Schwartz, Elsie Groebner and Nancy Renner—will schedule to meet to audit the books in January.
- Anita explained that we are searching for new insurance for the church. Grinnel Mutual is not renewing our insurance coverage. She has asked for quotes from various companies. Church Mutual said they would come up with a policy plan for us.
- There are issues regarding parked vehicles on our parking lot when it is being cleared of snow. A letter will be sent to all neighbors explaining that they need to move their vehicles during snow removal.
- Staff Christmas Gifts—M/S/P to give gifts to Pastor Tricia, Katie, Anita, Al and Steve.
- Personnel Committee completed Staff Reviews. Discussion on the reviews and time off. M/S/P to approve the suggested wage increases for staff members that will be added to the 2023 Budget.

M/S/P to adjourn at 9:15 p.m. Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Next meeting will be Wednesday, January 11, 2023 at 7:45 p.m.

~Jeff Krueger, Church Council Secretary

**2022 Church Council**

Bill Vogel - Chair	Angel Clemon
John Mueller- Vice Chair	Jacob Marz
Jeff Krueger - Secretary	Sarah Groebner
Tim Vogel- Treasurer	Randy Wendt
There are 2 vacancies	

**Deadlines:**

**Sunday Bulletin:** Wednesday by 10 am.

**Epistle:** 20th of each month. Please call or email the church office with additions or changes for the bulletins or Epistle. [stpaul\\_lutheran@hotmail.com](mailto:stpaul_lutheran@hotmail.com)

**The nominating committee has begun their search for incoming board members. There will be 6 seats available for the year 2023 on the council with the term beginning in February 2023, with two of them eligible for re-election. Please consider joining the council for a 1 or 2 year term!**

**Other committees include Audit Committee, Nominating Committee, Scholarship Committee, Ingham Okoboji Lutheran Bible Camp Delegates, LCMC Delegates**

**Talk to John Mueller or Bill Vogel if you are willing to serve!**

St Paul Attendance				
Dec 4 ~ 58	Dec 11 ~ 97	Dec 18 ~ 178	Dec 24 ~ 210	Dec 25 ~ 31

Memorials Given 11/27/22 - 12/28/22		
<b>In Memory:</b>	<b>Given by:</b>	<b>Designated for:</b>
Madonna Hillesheim	Jim & Elsie Groebner	Good Shepherd Scholarship Fund
Betty Kieper	Richard & Lois Zihlke	St. Paul Lutheran Church

Budget Recap Year-To-Date (01/01/22 to 11/26/22)			
Total Funds for Budget	\$194,027.06	Total Operating Funds	\$194,027.06
Budget	\$190,297.12	Operating Exp.	\$193,165.61
Difference	\$3,729.94	Difference	\$861.45

**Thrivent Financial**—As always, St. Paul Lutheran Church is grateful for your consideration when you make charitable giving plans. If you are a Thrivent Financial member eligible to direct Choice Dollars<sup>SM</sup>, we ask you to consider St. Paul Lutheran as you help direct Thrivent Financials charitable funds.

**Church Directory!** We have an online church Directory!

- \* Go to <https://members.instantchurchdirectory.com/> and create a log-in account with your email the church office has on file. If you can't log in, let Katie know so we can get it entered!
- \* If you don't have access to the internet and would like a printed copy of the directory, let Katie know.
- \* Those with smartphones can easily download the Instant Church Directory app in the Apple App Store or Google Play Store and have the directory at their fingertips!
- \* The online directory can be updated constantly, so information should never be outdated! Email updated pictures, address or phone changes to Katie and they can be added instantly!

- Notice: Please update your phone numbers and/or email address with the church office!
- Several of the numbers we have are disconnected and we need to know how to get a hold of you!
- You can leave a note in the box outside of Katie's office, call or email the church office at 507-723-5880 or stpaul\_lutheran@hotmail.com. We appreciate you keeping us updated!

Please pray for...Dave Telecky (Jena Veenstra's dad), Larry Potter, Randy Wendt, The family of William Halter, Bud Wendt, Linda Fischer (Delmar Nelson's daughter), Jarrett Sharp (Jo Muske's brother), Adam Gewerth, Marcia Schiller, Sherry Fenger; Cylee Graff, Shane Clemon, Ethan Langseth, Emily Wendt, Tabor Gluth and all those serving in the military, at home and abroad.

**Prayer Chain** –If you have a prayer concern you would like passed along, please call Jan Severson (723-6358) or the church office (723-5880). Please specify if you want the concern on (1) the Prayer Chain and/or (2) included in Sunday morning prayers which will be included for **two** Sundays unless otherwise specified or request is renewed.

# January 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> 9:00 Worship 10:30 Ch. 8 Broadcast	<b>2</b> 3:00 pm The Maples Bible Study	<b>3</b> 6:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 pm Ch. 8 Broadcast cast	<b>4</b> 10:00 Ch. 8 Broadcast 6:00 Luther League Meeting 6:30 Confirmation 7:30 Choir Rehearsal	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> Office Closed	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> 9:00 Worship 10:00 Sunday School 10:00 Coffee Talk 10:10 Lutheran Difference Study 10:30 Ch. 8 Broadcast	<b>9</b> 3:00 pm The Maples Bible Study 6:00 Parish Ed Meeting	<b>10</b> 6:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 pm Ch. 8 Broadcast cast	<b>11</b> 10:00 Ch. 8 Broadcast 6:30 Confirmation 7:30 Choir Rehearsal 7:45 Church Council Meeting	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> Office Closed	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> 9:00 Worship 10:00 Sunday School 10:00 Coffee Talk 10:10 Lutheran Difference Study 10:30 Ch. 8 Broadcast	<b>16</b> 3:00 pm The Maples Bible Study	<b>17</b> 10:00 SJLH Worship 6:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 pm Ch. 8 Broadcast cast Pastor on vacation	<b>18</b> 10:00 Ch. 8 Broadcast 6:30 Confirmation 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> Office Closed	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> 9:00 Worship 10:00 Sunday School 10:00 Coffee Talk 10:10 Lutheran Difference Study 10:30 Ch. 8 Broadcast Pastor on vacation	<b>23</b> 3:00 pm The Maples Bible Study	<b>24</b> 6:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 pm Ch. 8 Broadcast cast 7:15 pm SAFE Annual Meeting	<b>25</b> 10:00 Ch. 8 Broadcast 6:30 Confirmation 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> Office Closed	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> 9:00 Worship 10:00 Sunday School <b>10:00 Annual Meeting</b> 10:30 Ch. 8 Broadcast	<b>30</b> 3:00 pm The Maples Bible Study	<b>31</b> 6:00 pm Bible Study 7:00 pm Ch. 8 Broadcast cast		St. Paul Lutheran Church, 303 N Cass Ave, Springfield, MN 56087 Church Telephone: 507-723-5880 <a href="http://www.splespringfield.org">www.splespringfield.org</a> Pastor's e-mail: <a href="mailto:pastortriciamattson@gmail.com">pastortriciamattson@gmail.com</a> Office e-mail: <a href="mailto:stpaul_lutheran@hotmail.com">stpaul_lutheran@hotmail.com</a>		

## 9:00 am Worship Service

Date	Sound & Video	Reader	Acolyte	Usher	Organist
1/1	Paul & Jonah	Jeanette Pidde	Jenna Shaw Russell Johnson	Team 1	Jo Schwartz
1/8	John Mueller	Paul Muske	Wyatt Mueller Ashtyn Rudolph	Team 2	Jeff Krueger
1/15	Tim Vogel	Daniel Kettner	Nathan Johnson Braxton Brown	Team 3	Jo Schwartz
1/22	Russell Rogotzke	Jordan Pidde	Abby Dove Ayvah Wendt	Team 4	Jeff Krueger
1/29	Peter Heitzman	Jo Muske	Gabby Schenk Bobbi Jo Timm	Team 1	Jo Schwartz

### Usher Teams

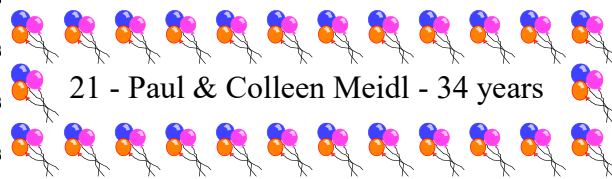
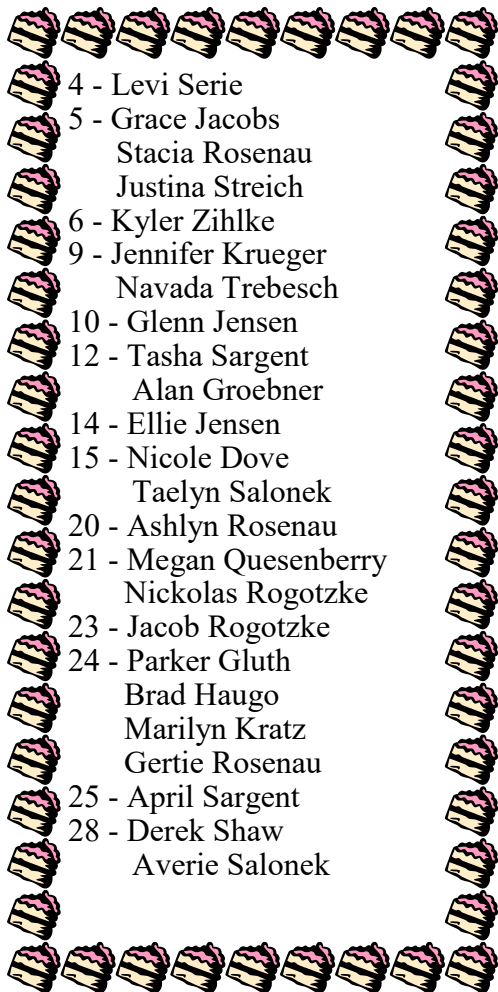
- 1 - Delwin Beussman, Don Bloemke, John Marz, Paul Meidl, Nic Mays
- 2 - Doug Gatzlaff, Kurt Kratz, Mike Marz, Dave Bittler
- 3 - Doug Schiller, Russell Rogotzke
- 4 - Mark Buerkle, Tim Vogel, Scott Vogel, Kurt Glaeseman, Bill Vogel

### January Altar Guild

Kari Haugo

### January Birthdays!

### January Anniversaries!



We are in need of a few people to help with Altar Guild.  
 Tasks include:

- \*Set up/clean up for communion a few times a year (usually the two Sundays a month, two months a year).
- \*Changing the Altar cloths as needed during your scheduled month.

It is a very easy task and extra help would be much appreciated. Please talk to Katie if you would like to hear more.

Bring your empty egg cartons to the church kitchen or drop off at Katie's office.

## SPLC New Member Orientation

We will be holding new member orientation sessions on Tuesdays, January 31, February 7 and 21, from 7:00-8:15 p.m. During the sessions, you will learn about St. Paul's, and we will watch and discuss short video clips on the Small Catechism. Expect the sessions to be thought provoking, challenging, and comforting! If needed, childcare can be arranged. Please share this information with others! You may RSVP for the sessions by contacting Katie or Pr. Tricia at 723-5880 or via email at [stpaul\\_lutheran@hotmail.com](mailto:stpaul_lutheran@hotmail.com) or [pastortricimattson@gmail.com](mailto:pastortricimattson@gmail.com).



### Luther House of Study

PROCLAMATION ON THE PRAIRIE~ JANUARY 13-14, 2023  
West Nidaros Lutheran 25403 471st Ave, Crooks, SD 57020

#### Event Schedule

##### **Friday January 13, 2023**

4:30p - Registration & Fellowship

5:30p - Worship

6:30p - Teaching "Apart from the Law: The Unfair God"

##### **Saturday January 14, 2023**

9:00a - Teaching

10:45a - Brunch

12:00p - Teaching

1:30p - Heading home

Requested fee of \$50 includes fellowship, brunch, and program. Online attendance fee of \$0 at registration.

### Augustana District Theological Conference

#### Living in the Promise:

#### A Conversation About Law and Gospel

**February 6-7, 2023**

**Bloomington, MN**

This year's Convocation of the Cross topic "Living in the Promise" does not offer a resolution to this centuries-old debate, but rather a healthy and theologically rich conversation about law and gospel. We invite you to witness Dr. Robert Kolb and Dr. Steven Paulson discuss the topic and join the conversation as we live in Christ's promise together!

To register go to <https://augustanadistrict.org/2023-theological-conference/>

### Upcoming Retreats at Ingham Okoboji Lutheran Bible Camp

**Winter Crafting Retreat, February 3-5, 2023.** Come to camp for a weekend of fun, fellowship, massages, and accomplishment! \$119 per person-Friday through Sunday.

**Marriage Retreat, February 10-12, 2023.** Using themes from their "More to this Life" Marriage Enrichment Course, Pastors Jana and Jonathan Swenson will encourage couples to "look in, look out and look up" as a tool for strengthening their marriage, emotionally, relationally and spiritually. Drawing on the wisdom of God's Word and mixing in a whole lot of laughter and grace, couples will leave the weekend renewed in their relationship with Christ and their commitment to each other. \$209 for the weekend per couple, \$119 commuter rate per couple (breakfast not included) Registration at 7:30 pm on Feb. 10 Programming Begins at 8:00 pm Weekend Concludes with Lunch at 11:00 am on Feb. 12

Visit <https://www.okoboji.org/forms> for a digital brochure.

Questions? Call:1-800-656-2654 or Email: [registrar@okoboji.org](mailto:registrar@okoboji.org)

6th Annual Sparkle and Dine Event sponsored by St. Raphael's is set for Monday, February 13th, at the Springfield Area Community Center. Table hostesses are needed! The cost is \$160 per table (\$20 per person) and includes fellowship, beautiful themed tables, and a catered meal. This is a fun and elegant evening of socializing, laughing and spending time with your friends!

This year proceeds will go towards the Theresa House, a women's shelter supported by the non-profit organization Partners for Housing in Mankato. This organization provides emergency shelters, transitional housing and affordable housing options for individuals and families in the Mankato Area.

Registration forms are due by January 23, 2023 and can be found outside of Katie's office.



**St. Paul Lutheran  
Church, LCMC**  
303 N Cass Avenue  
Springfield, MN 56087

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Address Service Requested

**Calendar Highlights - January 2023**  
**24 - SAFE Annual Meeting**  
**29 - Annual Meeting**

**Phone: 507-723-5880**  
**Fax: 507-723-8712**

**Office Hours**

*Pastor: Tricia Mattson*  
Monday & Thursday 9-noon  
Wednesday 1-4  
Or by appointment  
pastortriciamattson@gmail.com

Parish Coordinator: Katie Mueller  
Monday-Thursday 8:00 am-noon  
Email: stpaul\_lutheran@hotmail.com

Housekeeping: Steve Lyle

Maintenance: Al Groebner

Financial Secretary: Anita Jensen  
Fin\_secretary@newulmtel.net

St. Paul EPISTLE is a publication of St. Paul Lutheran Church. It is published monthly to keep members and friends informed of programs and ministries of the church.

Articles may be submitted for publication subject to content.

**Sunday Schedule:**

9:00 a.m. Worship  
10:00 a.m. Sunday School  
10:00 a.m. Coffee Talk



**Springfield Area Food Shelf hours**  
**Tuesday 5:00pm – 7:00pm**  
**Thursday 9:30am – 11:30am**  
**625 N Jackson Ave - Springfield, MN 56087**  
**(Springfield Clinic Lower Level)**  
**507-723-3663 (FOOD)**

**We are on the Web!**  
**[www.splcspringfield.org](http://www.splcspringfield.org)**