St. Paul Newscaster



Published monthly in the interest of St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church Diller, Nebraska

Our Mission

To open our hearts and doors to share God's promise by transforming lives through our commitment and discipleship to Jesus Christ.

December 2023Pastor Mark Liscom

Advent and Christmas: Learning to wait

The assumption of this article is that as you read this, you are waiting for something. There is something you want, something you wish for, something that you would like to see happen as you read this. It could be something as practical as a loan to be paid off, or something more personal like an inner sense of peace and contentment. You might be waiting for your child to be a little less rebellious, or your spouse to stop that irritating habit. But one thing is certain. All of us are waiting for something.

The assumption of this article is also that for you this waiting is probably experienced as something negative. A little build up in the traffic in Beatrice and you see people starting to get anxious and irritated. We don't like to wait. Waiting for us means that we are wasting time, that we are inefficient, that we aren't being productive. The gods that our culture worship have a simple message: "Get going! get busy! Do something! Make yourself useful!

But the truth is this: No amount of busyness ends the waiting. And the truth is also this: That all the things you are waiting for will never bring you what you are waiting for. For when all the loans are paid, and the people in your family have finally become what you want them to be, when you finally have enough money, or traffic lets up guess what you will find? More waiting. Waiting never ends.

For many people this may be discouraging. But the season of Advent and Christmas says something very different about waiting. The story of Advent and Christmas says that you are waiting, because God's Spirit is active and alive in you. We wait after all, because we have something like eternity within us. Stop the busyness. Just stop and wait. It will be hard for a while. But after a while the Christ child will begin to arrive. A sense of solitude. A sense that I can be content with what I have. The assurance that God is with us. And so there it is. It is in the waiting that we find what are waiting for.

My prayer is that you would receive the gift that Advent and Christmas bring season. The gift of learning to wait, expecting Jesus to be born in you. Blessings to you this Advent and Christmas Season.

Editor: Kendra K. Weers

Typist: Kendra K. Weers Calendar: Kendra K. Weers
Assembly: Kendra K. Weers

Newscaster Reporters

Church Council – Brian Weers Treasurer's Report – Allen Roelfs
WELCA – Peggy Hemphill Eunice Circle – Irene Gibson
Work Day – Carolyn Schultis

Christian Education and VBS – Elizabeth Roelfs, Sheri Schultis and Kristen Hennerberg

Youth News – Joely Weers, Myleigh Weers and Brennan Schultis
Worship Committee – Council Mutual Ministry Committee – Council
Birthdays & Anniversaries – Jane Pretzer Personals – Elizabeth Roelfs
WELCA Coffee List – Elizabeth Roelfs Acolyte List – Pastor Mark Liscom
Worship Assistants & Greeters Lists – Sherry Henrichs







Irene Gibson in Loving Memory of Karl and Elenora Bunting for their December 22nd Anniversary and

Charlie and Ardie Barber
Thankful for the Many Blessings
as we Celebrate our 50th Anniversary

Thank You for sponsoring this Newscaster in Memory of your Loved Ones and your Milestone anniversary and for supporting this publication.

Sponsors for 2023 have been fulfilled, we thank you!

There is an orange sign-up sheet on the announcements bulletin board in the back of the Narthex for 2024, and there are currently NO sponsors for January and February issues.

Please consider sponsoring this important communication tool for our congregation.

Sunday, December 3

Hanging of the Greens Service by Youth

Sunday, December 10

Caroling for the Congregation and Youth 4:30pm

Sunday, December 24

Sunday Worship Service 9:30am Community Christmas Eve Service Children's Christmas Eve Program and Candlelight Service 7pm



St. Paul Lutheran Church Council Minutes for November 15, 2023

Council members present were Gary Bergmeier, Peg Hemphill, Allen Roelfs, Brian Weers, Diane Wellsandt, Jeanettwe Bures and Pastor Mark. Pastor started the meeting with a short presentation about how we trust each other and God sightings were shared. Pastor Mark offered a prayer. The minutes of the October meeting were read. Allen made the motion to approve the minutes as read and Peg seconded. The minutes were approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Benevolence is on track, bills have been paid, and things are going ok. Thanks go out to the congregation! Diane moved to accept the report and Brian seconded. Motion passed.

MEMORIAL TREASURER'S REPORT

There was an interest payment on the account of \$4.98. The balance in the account is now \$24,750.34. Allen moved to accept the report and Peg seconded. The report was approved.

PASTOR'S REPORT

1 Rural Ministry class, 3 Confirmation classes including a service project at MOSAIC, 1 Youth Group meeting, 4 Sunday Services including All Saints Sunday, 4 home communions, 1 Christian Education meeting, 1 First Communion/Acolyte training session, 2 Pre-Marital meetings. Is working on First Communion for December 3 along with Hanging of the Greens service. National Bishop, Elizabeth Eaton, is taking a 6-month leave of absence.

VICE-CHAIR REPORT

Potluck meal held at church went well, but thought more people would have remained after church to participate. Things are going ok.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Christian Education – decided on a program for Christmas Eve. Since Christmas Eve is on a Sunday, there will be worship service in the morning and program in the evening.

Property – Did not meet, but the council discussed the following issues: may find some paint for northeast door of the church to help match the new doors; may put some lights in the east windows for Christmas; the camera wasn't working for the November 12th service, Pastor and Dave reset the unit by unplugging then re-plugging it, seems to have fixed the problem; discussed the screen door in the kitchen.

Communication & Outreach - N/A

Memorial – Met on Sunday, November 12th, all memorials have been contacted about the front door, so are just waiting for the kitchen window to be finished for us to get the final bill

Family Night – Christmas Caroling is planned for December 10th, meeting at the church at 4:30

Music & Worship – Hanging of the Greens Service December 3rd during worship service

Food Stand – N/A

OLD BUSINESS

- Pastor would like to meet with Ellis church about funerals.
- Trunk or Treat went well
- Eternal candle may move to offering plate stand. Altar Guild proposed using the Kerry candle oil that burns cleaner instead of the current Ultra Pure oil as a way to reduce soot. The purchase of the Kerry liquid was approved.
- Darin will be contacted about getting the springs for the conference room door.

NEW BUSINESS

- Web hosting contract needs to be done by December 10th, we can get a discount if we do a 2-year contract
- Heartland Bank has purchased Odell State Bank, where the church has its accounts
- Discussed preliminary budget for 2024 considering a 3% increase in Pastor's salary salary is up slightly, benefits down slightly; we will finalize the budget at the December meeting; utilities are higher this year, the new furnace should help reduce the costs; property insurance was higher this year as well
- Pastor Mark will be gone from December 19-22 for his nephew's wedding

The next council meeting was set for December 20th at 7pm and committees to meet at 6:30pm. Jeanette moved to adjourn the meeting and Allen seconded. The meeting was adjourned and closed with the Lord's Prayer.

- Brian Weers, Council Secretary

TREASURER'S REPORT

As of 11/12/2023

rent Balances		Operating Expenses
General Fund	\$ 6,959.19	Available Cash
Benevolence	\$ 711.10	Remaining Bills
Designations	\$ 3,405.44	Portico
Total	\$11,075,73	Remainir



Remaining Bills		
Portico	\$ 1,851.21	Due mid-December
Remaining Bal	\$ 5,107.98	

\$ 6.959.19

Offering Summary

	September	October	November
Current	\$ 6,113.40	\$ 10,622.01	\$ 3,119.80
Benevolence	\$ 1,129.60	\$ 604.90	\$ 106.20
Designated Funds	\$ 630.00	<u>\$ 101.00</u>	<u>\$ 25.00</u>
Totals	\$ 7,873.00	\$ 11,327.91	\$ 3,251.00
			(partial month)

We need to receive \$9,754.00 in CURRENT each month in order to meet our budget for 2023.

Eunice Circle Women's Bible Study



Eunice Circle met on November 13, 2023 at 1:30pm. Norma Banahan led our Bible Study. Holy Places - Pilgrimage.

Our study texts were from: Matthew 2:1-12; Luke 9:1-6; Luke 19:28-44; Luke 24:13-35; John 1:35-42. The focus verse "When Jesus turned and saw them, 'What are you looking for?' They said to him, Rabbi (which translated means Teacher), where are you staying?" He said to them, "Come and See."

We opened with prayer and Hymn, "Bless Now, O God, the Journey." We closed with prayer and Hymn, "I'm Going On a Journey" and The Lord's Prayer.

Norma called our meeting to order. Minutes were read and approved. Five (5) members answered roll call and one (1) guest was present. Our offering was \$37.00.

Old Business: Faith Formation children packed 40 school kit bags, remainder of bags were finished by one member of Eunice Circle. Total of 50 school kit bags. Coat and food collection taking place. We will pack quilts on October 24th.

New Business: Confirmation children put 55 Baby Care Kits together. Work Day on November 28th. Coat drive is coming to an end.

After Grace, Jane Pretzer served refreshments.

Next Eunice Circle meeting will be Dec. 11th at 1:30pm, Nov/Dec book. Ardith Barber will be Hostess. Irene Gibson will lead the Bible Study.

~ Irene Gibson, Recorder



On Our Choughts and Prayers

~ Sondra Germer, Jill Bergmeier and Holli Pretzer were hospitalized recently. We are happy to report that all are fully recovered and we are thankful for the skilled hands that cared for them.

Please remember in your prayers all of our members and extended church family who are not able to be with us, those that are in assisted living and care centers and those who may be in need of God's comfort, healing and peace:

Eldean Banahan, Robert Weers, Norris Gold, Tyler Wolken, Mike Balderson, Norman Balderson and Betty and Ervin Hennerberg



Women of the ELCA

Unit Meeting October 29, 2023



A Unit Meeting of the Women of the ELCA was held following the church service on Sunday, October 29, 2023 with 12 members present.

We opened with the reading of the Purpose Statement of the Women of the ELCA in unison:

"As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world."

Jane Pretzer gave a short devotion on Thankfulness and Gratitude. She shared several poems – Thanksgiving Prayer and a Thanksgiving Poem which was on the lighter side that brought out the smiles in everyone.

The meeting was led by President, Ardith Barber.

Minutes of the August unit meeting were read by Secretary, Peggy Hemphill, and were approved as read.

Diane Wellsandt gave the Treasurer's report. The balance on hand is \$4,432.70. There were no outstanding bills to be submitted. The Treasurer's report was approved.

There was no correspondence.

Committee reports were given: **Work Group** – nothing new to report. **Monthly Card Project** volunteers for the next several months are: November – Kendra K. Weers; December – Sherry Henrichs; January – Beth Roelfs; February – Jill Zabokrtsky; March – Peg Hemphill.. **Work Day** – Carolyn reported that 29 quilts had been made this year. They meet on the 4th and 5th Tuesday's of each month. **Baby Care Kits** – Marcy Barber reported that 55 kits had been assembled. **School Kits** - there were 50 kits completed and a huge thank you goes out to Irene Gibson for heading up this project. A heartfelt Thank You goes out to Kendra K. Weers for delivering the Quilts, Baby Care Kits and School Kits to Omaha for us. Thank you to the Confirmation students and the Crosswalk students for helping assemble these kits. **College Students** – nothing new to report. **Eunice Circle** – meets on the second Monday of each month. **Kitchen** – Jeanette reported that we could use some tea and donations would be appreciated.

Ardith Barber, Diane Wellsandt and Peggy Hemphill all agreed to serve another year on the WELCA executive committee. President, Ardith Barber, thanked all the women for their involvement this year.

New Business: The Thank Offering service will be held on Sunday, November 19, 2023 with Beth Roelfs in charge. We set a goal of 750 pounds of food items for the annual Food Drive. The last Sunday to bring coats or winter items for the Coat Drive will be November 5, 2023. It was decided that WELCA will purchase cookies to serve after church on December 3rd which will be the Hanging of the Greens service. World Day of Prayer will be held the first Friday in March 2024 with the Ellis United Methodist Church women as hostesses.

Offering for the day was \$67. The next meeting will be announced after the first of the year.

The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

~ Respectfully submitted, Peggy Hemphill, Secretary





All photos from the Ingathering (dropoff) of the quilts, school kits, baby care kits and personal care kits in Omaha on November 3







St. Paul's Congregation observed All Saints Sunday during the November 5th Worship Service.



We remembered several members who have passed this year; Rick Whittemire, Franklin Damrow, David Lottman, Jean Schmidt, Russell Schultis and Isaiah Weers, whose services were held at St. Paul Lutheran.



The memorial for Cleo Perkins was used for the Wisemen Nativity figures for the Nativity scene in front of the church.

We give thanks to God today for all their lives and for the love of God that is stronger and more enduring than death.





Women of the ELCA Thank Offering Service and Community Thanksqiving Service

Women Show Their Gratitude Through Thank Offerings

The daily practice of giving thanks to God for blessings received is at the heart of our lives as women of faith. Even the ordinary blessings of daily life call us to gratitude. Lutheran women have a time-honored way to practice giving thanks - Thank Offerings.

The women of St. Paul brought their gifts forward during the service on November 19. A reflection was presented by Peg Hemphill, Marcy Barber, Kendra K. Weers and Beth Roelfs. Gifts totaling \$413.52 were given with the prayer that they be used to share God's love with others.

"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for You." 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

On Wednesday, November 22, St. Paul Lutheran held a community Thanksgiving Service. We are fortunate to be able to worship together and hear the message of hope and gratitude through scripture and remember the reason for Thanksgiving.

Pastor Mark's message was from a parable in the book of Mark entitled, "The parable of the Growing seed," one of the many ways Jesus described the reality of the kingdom he came to bring. It talks about how one scatters seed, and God goes to work in making it sprout and grow; the earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. Once the grain is ripe, the sower goes in with the sickle since the harvest has come. The way this is gratitude, is that instead of us always trying to "make" it happen or force things to happen, we need to get out of God's way and LET it happen, like the sown seed – we can't MAKE it grow, we have to LET it grow. Gratitude about what God does, let it happen, and be grateful.



Pastor Mark giving the Thanksgiving message

Word of Gratitude for December

Grateful living is important in the world because in our constant pursuit of more and better we can easily lose sight of the riches that lay right in front of us and within us.

Please consider participating in the regular practice of making a small Thank Offering gift each day for small blessings.

The annual Thank Offering service is held each November.



We celebrated the baptism of Kate Ann Stein on November 26, daughter of BJ and Shannon Stein. Sponsors were Megan Langenberg and Danielle Reeson.

Congratulations to Kate and her family. We are excited to fulfill our baptismal promises to help Kate grow in her faith.

Many Will Find Winter Warmth

As we cleaned out our closets, others were given the things needed to stay warm this winter. Our donations were delivered to the Coat Closet at First Christian Church in Beatrice and included the following cold weather items:

- ◆ 21 children's coats ◆ 12 men's coats and coveralls ◆ 17 women's coats ◆ 25 hats ◆
- ◆ 3 pairs of gloves ◆ 2 pairs of snow boots ◆ 9 pairs of socks and 1 pair of snow goggles.

Thank you to all who helped turn the unused or outgrown into blessings. A special thank you to Jan Gold who knitted many warm stocking hats to provide comfort to others.





Fall Food Drive Near Reaching Goal

The fall food drive at St. Paul is very close to reaching its goal of gathering 750 food or personal care items. As of November 26th the Food Thermometer reported a total of 566 items donated. This includes \$700 in cash (every \$5 = 3 items) and many tangible gifts. The campaign is a collaborative effort between the congregation and CrossWalk students. Donations will be gathered through early December. Our efforts will benefit the Blue Valley Community Action food pantry in Fairbury and the Wymore food pantry. CONTINUE YOUR SUPPORT OF THIS FUN A WORTHWHILE CHALLENGE. Let's blow past our goal while filling the pantry shelves.

Christmas Caroling and Soup Supper Fellowship will be held on Sunday, December 10

We would love to have you join us at 430pm at the church where we will go caroling at homebound members' homes in the area and in Diller as well.

Several delicious soups will be provided by the Family Night Committee after caroling, but please bring snacks to share to go along with the soup.

Come help us spread Christmas Cheer and enjoy good food and fellowship.







The impromptu choir sang "Beautiful Savior" from the Red Hymnal during our November 19th Worship service.

Thank you to those that come and share their music gifts. It truly makes our worship special!



CrossWalk Kids Continue Journey Through the Bible

The CrossWalk students have learned that God is with us through ups and downs and that he takes care of us through others. These God points were made through the Old Testament stories of Joseph and baby Moses.

They have continued to gather pop tabs and have filled 3 of the 5 jars needed to reach their goal for a 2nd time this year. The purpose is to support the Ronald McDonald House in Omaha AND to help the children learn that service to God can be small but impactful. Students have been invited to donate to the fall coat and food drives.

Day of Service

On November 8th the kids participated in a day of service. Their time was spent making thank you cards for Veterans from the communities of Diller and Odell, coloring appreciation posters for the Diller Fire and Rescue members and creating small thank you gifts for the school staff.

To help students understand the seasons of Advent and Christmas, each child was given a chocolate filled Advent calendar on November 29. We pray the daily practice of the calendar will help them learn of this period of preparation for the arrival of the Christ child.

Children's Christmas Eve Program

Practice for the Christmas Eve program will start on November 29 following CrossWalk and continue December 6 and 13 from 5 – 6. Dress rehearsal will be December 20 from 4 – 5. All students have been invited to be a part of this child's qift. **THERE WILL BE NO CROSSWALK ON DECEMBER 20.**





Youth a ctivities



The member from our congregation that participated in the Honor Choir was Joely Weers

Congratulations to the Diller-Odell Play Production (One Act) team, who placed 4th overall at the Pioneer Conference competition and 3rd overall at the District competition. Congratulations go to Joely Weers for receiving Superior ratings for acting at both the Conference and District Competitions. Tech crew received a Superior rating at the Conference competition. Cast members from our church are Joely Weers and Cole Ebeling. Tech team members from our church are Keira Hennerberg and Myleigh Weers



Congratulations to all who were selected for the 2023 Pioneer All-Conference Volleyball teams. A special congratulations to Diller-Odell's Keira Hennerberg 1st team and Myleigh Weers 1st team.



Diller-Odell choir participated in the Pioneer Conference Honor Choir Vocal Clinic on November 6 at Sterling High School. They performed five selections with a wide range of styles and looked great with the robes they received from St. Paul Lutheran.





December Birthdays

- 1 Adam Roelfs
- 1 Hayley Denner
- 4 Andrew Liscom
- 5 Lacey Sasse
- 8 Esdon Weers
- 9 Jeanette Hennerberg
- 9 Kellan Schlichtman
- 10 Jason Wellsandt
- 11 Jarrod Heidemann
- 11 Eden Lottman
- 16 Jan Gold

- 16 Stacy Schlichtman
- 16 Jadyn Schultis
- 18 Sarah Crabtree
- 19 Carolyn Schultis
- 21 Kristen Helmerichs
- Joe Novotny
- 26 Kelly Gold
- 26 RiLynn Sasse
- 29 BethLee Beran
- 29 Allen Roelfs
- 31 Kendra (Schmidt) Weers





December Wedding Anniversaries

December 8, 1973

Mr.& Mrs. Charles & Ardith Barber

December 30, 2006

Mr.& Mrs. Allen & Stacy Roelfs



VOLUNTEERS: If you are unable to serve on the Sunday(s) you are assigned, PLEASE arrange with someone else to fill in and notify others in the assigned Sunday of the change. Thank You!



December 3 Sunday Worship Service

With Holy Communion
First Communion
Hanging of the Greens Service
First Sunday in Advent
Worship Assistant, Kendra K Weers

ing Greeter, Gary Bergmeier

Coffee Service – Leatha Christ, Diane Wellsandt

December 10 Sunday Worship Service Second Sunday in Advent

Worship Assistant, Jamie Schultis Greeter, Jim Bures Coffee Service – Cheryl Denner Marlene Wolken

December 17 Sunday Worship Service Third Sunday in Advent

Worship Assistant, Diane Wellsandt Greeter, Dennis Nippert Coffee Service – Stacy Schlichtman, Marla Weichel

December 24 Sunday Worship Service Fourth Sunday in Advent

Worship Assistant, Kendra K Weers _ Greeter, Dean Pretzer Coffee Service – Beth Roelfs

December 24 Christmas Eve Service Children's Christmas Eve Program

Candlelight Service

Ushers - Church Council

December 31 Sunday Worship Service

Worship Assistant, David Henrichs Greeter, Charles Barber Coffee Service – Peg Hemphill, Shannon Stein



January 7 Sunday Worship Service With Holy Communion Epiphany Sunday

Worship Assistant, Sherry Henrichs Greeter, Gary Bergmeier Coffee Service – Beth Roelfs, Kristen Hennerberg

December 2023



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* Facebook – St. Paul's Lutheran Church Diller Nebraska

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SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
*** CHECK THE WEEKLY BULLETIN, FACEBOOK PAGE OR CHURCH WEBSITE for Calendar updates *** Some events may change and/or were not available at press time				1	2	
Worship Service 3 Holy Communion 9:30 AM First Communion Hanging of the Greens Hanging Hanging Henging Henging	4	5	CROSS WALK 4pm Christmas Program Practice 5pm Confirmation 7:00pm	7	8	9
Blue Hymnal 10 Worship Service 9:30 AM Caroling and Soup Supper Second Sunday, Advent 4:30pm	11 Eunice Circle 1:30pm	12	CROSS WALK 4pm Christmas Program Practice 5pm Confirmation 7:00pm	14	15	16
Red Hymnal 17 Worship Service 9:30 AM Third Sunday // Advent	18	Pastor Out of Town until 22 nd	CROSS WALK Christmas Program Practice 4-5pm Committee and Council Meetings 6:30/7pm NO Confirmation	21 First Day of Winter Newscaster items due	Pastor Returns	23
Blue Hymnal 24 Worship Service 9:30 AM Fourth Sunday, Advent Congregational Christmas Eve Service 7:00 pm	25 Merry Christmas	26 Office Closed	NO Cross Walk	28	29	30
Red Hymnal 31 Worship Service 9:30 AM			St. Paul Lu PO Box 37 Diller, NE			