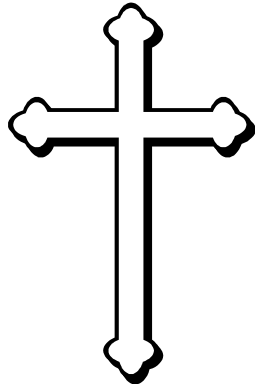


**SUNDAY
SCHEDULE
Traditional Worship
10 a.m.**



**SATURDAY
WORSHIP
4 p.m. year-round**

*"The Mission of St. Paul's
Evangelical Lutheran
Church is to **SHARE**, at all
times and with all people,
the Good News of **GOD'S
GRACE**, through
CHRIST JESUS."*

THE FORWARD December 21, 2021
St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church
67 North Fifth Street
Newark, OH 43055-5031

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THE FORWARD
THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF
ST. PAUL'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
NEWARK, OHIO *DECEMBER 21, 2021*

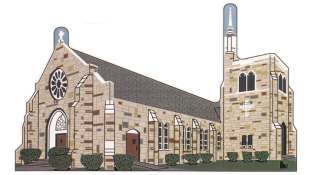
Church Phone: 740-345-6115 Web Site: <www.stpaulselca.org>

Pastor: Martin P. Gehring

Congregation Council President: Tim Jordan

Office Secretary: Jodie Nickles

Church Phone: 740-345-6115



Cell phone: 586.864.4004

Office Hours: M T W 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. or by appointment

email: trjordan4281@gmail.com

Mon-Fri 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Web Site: www.stpaulselca.org

Emmanuel – *God With Us* Once more I draw from the pile of
Reformation Day questions, and

this one seemed appropriate for the Advent/Christmas season: “How do we
honestly tell people in the midst of disasters or personal crises that God is
with them and will protect them?”

I have often asked myself exactly this as I try to offer comfort to others
in time of crises. Sometimes my own words sound hollow when I try to
reassure them. For me, the heart of this question lies in the word “honestly.”
If I am *honest* with myself, I have to acknowledge that I have never seen
someone’s cancer disappear because of prayer. God is not going to alter the
laws of physics or biology to make my deceased father get up and take his
place again at the dinner table. The idea that prayer will lead to divine
intervention leads to all sorts of dilemmas. Does God choose to answer some
prayers and not others? If so, then why not mine? Are multiple prayers
somehow better than a single prayer? At any given football game, the
stadium is roughly split between two camps praying for diametrically
opposed outcomes. Who wins? If prayer is all about outcomes, then we are
likely to find ourselves disappointed. So to the questioner’s point, can I
honestly tell someone God will protect them? No, I cannot.

But can I tell them God is with them? Yes. This lies at the very heart of
my faith, and of Christmas. The mystery of the incarnation reveals a God
who is invested body and soul not only in our spiritual being, but in our
material being as well. God does not remain above the fray, but walks with

us through the dark and the storm, through doubt and suffering and illness and death. In the Apostles' Creed we confess that Christ *descended into hell*, a breathtaking confession of God's willingness to go to the ends of the earth and heaven and hell to be with us. There is *no place so distant, hopeless, painful, or cut off that Christ is not already there ahead of us*.

I cannot know God directly, but I can know Christ because Christ is one with us, and therefore I am one with Christ. 1 John 4:15 says, "Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God." I may not be able to say what God will do in any given circumstance, but I can tell you what I will do. I can be God's presence for those who need God. In the parable of the sheep and goats, those who served the hungry and homeless and imprisoned were surprised to find Christ's presence in those they served. I suppose it is logical to suppose that a few of those served might equally have been surprised to discover Christ in those serving them. One of our hymns says, "Will you let me be your servant, let me be as Christ to you?" Prayer is not a magic incantation to insure divine intervention. Rather, prayer serves to center us in Christ and open our eyes to perceive his presence with and through each other, and the new possibilities that presence brings with it. We are the body of Christ. This is no small thing. God bless you all! *Pastor Martin*

Please keep the following people in your prayers: Bill Wittman, Linda Smart, Richard Buse (Terri Beamer's brother), **Lee Sidle**, (friend of Gene Lamp).



Those with long-term ongoing concerns: Mary Beamer (now in hospice care), Tandra Simon, Pastor Martin Waack, Milton & Carmella Holman, Ernie Cooperider, Peg Hupp, Starr Cummings, Pamela Graham, Jena Olien-Harris, Logan Johnson, Marshall Rosene, Pastor Betsy, Ruth Swinehart, Ginny Baker, Betty Neighbarger, Wilma Keller, Terry Nelson, Margaret Marx, Rose Godenschwager, Frances Slebodnik, Terrie Baker, Alice Smith.

If you need an address for anyone or wish to add someone to the list, please call the office.

DECEMBER 2021 CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Friday, December 24th (Christmas Eve)

3 p.m. – Youth and Family Service

10 p.m. – Traditional Candlelight Service

Saturday, Dec. 25th – Christmas Day – NO WORSHIP SERVICE

Sunday Dec. 26th – 10 a.m. Worship Service

Unless infection rates decline, masks will be required.



2022 ESTIMATE OF GIVING - Below you will find a detachable “Estimate of Giving” for 2022 for use by your family or by you as an individual. Please fill it out, cut along the dotted line, and deposit it in the offering plate in church, or mail it to the church office at 67 N. 5th Street, Newark, Ohio, 43055.

2022 ESTIMATE OF GIVING FORM: I want to help support the ministry of my congregation, and I estimate that during the next year I will give to my church:

\$_____ per week, or \$_____ per month, or \$_____ per year to be divided as follows:

_____ for Current Fund _____ for Synod Giving

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

.....

THE WHEN’S AND THE WHERE’S – If your group is starting up again, please let us know so we can get your information on the church calendar!

- **ST. PAUL’S BOOK CLUB** meets the third Monday evening of each month at 7 p.m. in Weisgerber Lounge.
- **AA** meets every Saturday morning at 11 a.m. in Danford Hall and on Fridays at noon.
- **Friday Fellowship Bible Study** meets every Friday morning at 10 a.m. in Weisgerber Lounge.
- **Ruth Circle** meets next on January 12th at 10:15 to noon in Danford Hall.
- **The Deadline for Annual Report information is 2 p.m.** on Friday the 7th.
- **Church Council** will meet Monday December 27th at 7 p.m.

Notes to the Church and Congregation:
PASTOR’S NEW OFFICE HOURS - Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday
9 a.m. to 2 p.m. or by appointment.

SHUT-INS – If you are in need of pastoral care, a friendly visit, or would like communion brought to your home, please contact the office and leave a message with Jodie between the hours of 10 and 2. Thanks!

ARE YOU GRIEVING THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE? – The Grief Group meets on the 2nd Wednesday of December at 1:30 in Danford Hall. If you would like more information, please contact Thelma Trainor or Jean Hovland.

THE ANNUAL REPORT! If you usually submit a report for the Annual report or you would like some information included, please have that information emailed or delivered to the church office no later than Friday January 7th. Emailing works really well because all I have to do is cut and paste. Thanks! Kerrill

RUMMAGE SALE PLANS!!! After a 2-year hiatus, plans are being made to hold the church rummage sale the weekend after Easter in 2022, Friday April 22nd and Saturday April 23rd. In order to make this happen, we need volunteers to arrange items on the tables, work during the sale and help box up and move on remaining items on Saturday afternoon. If you can help, please come to a meeting on Saturday January 22nd at 9 a.m. A light breakfast will be provided. If you cannot attend but can help, please see Kerrill Foster or Diane Ganz.

CHURCH DOOR WREATHS FOR CHIRSTMAS SEASON
These have been ordered, if you would like to donate them or help cover the cost of \$60 per wreath, please contact the church office.

Sunday Volunteers for January 2022

Position	Jan 2 nd	Jan 9 th	Jan 16 th	Jan 23 rd	Jan 30 th
Cantor	Juli Rauch	Tim Jordan	Ruth Gehring	Alice Burney	Kerrill Foster
Lector	Betsy Kleinknecht	Ainsley Laidlaw-Smith	Jerry Young	Kerrill Foster	Diane Ganz
Usher	Charles Cooperider	Charlie-Laidlaw Smith	Greg Everingham	Don Miller	Florence Knerr
Counters	Fred & Lindsay Freytag, Sally Finck	Julie Lamp, Richard & Diana Koch	Sally Finck, Greg & Kim Everingham	Kerrill Foster, Don Miller	Diane Ganz, Kerrill Foster

January Birthdays

1 - Brin Fulton	10 -Hydi Laidlaw-Smith	Samantha Woolard
2 - Carmella Holman	12 - Larissa Fuller	22 - Kira Coad-Pope
Jean Hovland (80)	Lyric Wilson	Adam Hall
Sofia Swisher-Morris	13 - Al Miller	23 - Johanna Hartfield
3 - David Graham	14 - Stephen Crews	Belinda Seabright
Christian Thacher	Harry Simon	24 - Carol Sunkle (93)
4 - Caroline King	15 -Rachel Freytag	25 - Betsy Williams
5 - John A. Jordan	Cox	27 - Reece Dupler
6 - Kelsey Stanley	Bradley Pastorius	28 - Tim Grigsby
8 - Chance Settles	Olivia Pastorius	Faith Settles
10 - Linda Crawmer	16 - Sam Irvin	31 - Diane Ganz
Alex Crews	17 - April Frazee	
Ariel Hall	18 - Aidan Fraley	
Ian Jordan	19 - Ron Howard	
	21 - Crystal Stamper	

January Anniversaries

1 – David & Marilyn Doll (52)	12 - Ken & Kelly Green (37)
Andrew & Courtney Swisher (10)	
	14 - Donald & Katie Miller (55)
2 Martin & Ruth Gehring (34)	

Financial Reports

Received August 31, 2021:	Year to Date	Offerings Budget
Offerings \$ 13,918.00	\$ 84,113.00	10,000mo.
Benevolence 470.00	2,862.00	80,000 ytd
14,388.00	86,975.00	
Received September 30, 2021:	Year to Date	Offerings Budget
Offerings \$ 12,999.84	\$ 97,151.84	10,000mo.
Benevolence 385.00	3,247.00	90,000 ytd
13,384.84	100,398.84	
Received October 31, 2021:	Year to Date	Offerings Budget
Offerings \$ 19,264.00	\$ 116,415.84	10,000mo.
Benevolence 560.00	3,807.00	100,000 ytd
19,824.00	120,222.84	
Received November 30, 2021:	Year to Date	Offerings Budget
Offerings \$ 12,903.39	\$ 128,588.55	10,000mo.
Benevolence 0.00	3,807.00	110,000 ytd
12,903.39	132,395.55	
Our thanks to Carole Carter for her generous donation in memory of her parents, Luther & Millie Hanshue . Thank you also to our Thrivent members for their continuing support!		
Total Income for Operations as of November 30, 2021	\$140,648.58	
Total Operating Expenses as of October 31, 2021	- 139,033.57	
Balance	1,615.01	

At the Congregation meeting held at the services December 11th and 12th, the Budget for the 2022 calendar year passed by unanimous vote.

ALTAR FLOWERS AND SANCTUARY LAMP CANDLES
We have found a new florist to provide our altar flowers! Please call the church office if you wish to sponsor the altar flowers or sanctuary lamp candle. Cost is \$20 per vase and \$5 for the candle.