

**SEASONS
DECEMBER 2017**

**St. Paul Lutheran Church
2860 East Market Street
Warren, OH 44483
330-394-5741**

**Merry
Christmas**



SUNDAY WORSHIP TIMES

**Emmanuel
9:00 am**

**Living Lord
8:00 & 10:30 am**

**St. Paul
10:30 am**

SUNDAY SCHOOL TIMES

10:00 am

9:15 am

9:30 am

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICES

**St. Paul – No 10:30 am Worship Service;
7:00 pm Vespers; 7:30 pm Candlelight Worship Service with Holy Communion**

FROM PASTOR ANN MARIE WINTERS:

Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders...

Jesus came as a little child, in peace and in humility. As we lay the babe in the manger and remember his birth, let us also reflect on his coming as a great and powerful cosmic event. He came as God's son. Jesus was destined to be the ruler of all the earth, and given titles similar to those given to an Egyptian king: "Wonderful Counselor" refers to a political leader; "Mighty God" to a warrior; "Everlasting Father" to one who cares for his people; and the "Prince of Peace" to one who brings prosperity.

These titles point to an aspect of Christmas that makes me reflect in wonder at God's coming down. And I stand in awe at the event of God stooping from his throne to be born in flesh and blood. In this act of humbling himself, God "takes the government upon his shoulders". He is our King, no matter what political powers pertain to us, we are claimed as God's subjects – in fact, we are his own sons and daughters.

For all its peace and mildness, Christmas is also a powerful moment! Come and worship the newborn king!

Worshipping with you,
Pastor Ann Marie Winters

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT CONCERNING OUR SHARED MINISTRY:

There will be two Town Hall meetings on **Sunday, December 3, 2017**. The first meeting is at 9:00 am at Living Lord in the sanctuary. The second meeting is a Joint Town Hall at 12:00 pm at St. Paul in Cassel Hall.

Purpose: To request permission for our Shared Ministry Team to continue to prepare a viable plan for consolidation that could be considered for congregational approval in the future. (The vote for permission to develop a plan is scheduled for our January 28, 2018, Annual Congregational Meetings.) There is much more work, investigation, analysis, and planning to be done before a viable plan for consolidation can be completed. At this meeting, we need to answer your questions and to get your input on our proposed process.

Note: A vote for consolidation will not occur until a viable plan is presented in the future.

Town Hall Meeting Procedure: To present current informational data about:

1. Our two church buildings – presenting a comparison of:
 - a. Operational costs and mission activity in the building that affects that cost.
 - b. Capacity.
 - c. Long-term scheduled maintenance costs.
2. The financial status of each congregation:
 - a. A comparison of our budgets.
 - b. A comparison of our balance sheets.
3. Mission Envisioning Plan

Note: The building and financial comparisons will give an overview of our resources and a base from which we can dream about new ministry together and the resources that could make that possible.

Rollie Walters and Terry Cephlecci will present the Building data.
Dave Henderson and Phil Lapmardo will present the Financial data.

This will set the stage for the presentation of the Mission Envisioning Plan to be presented by Stacey Altieri and Diana Bauman.

We encourage everyone to come to St. Paul at 12:00 pm for soup and sandwiches, provided and served by our youth who are going to Houston for the ELCA National Youth Gathering. A donation for lunch will help pay their expenses.

The presentation at St. Paul will begin as soon as everyone is served and seated. There will be a Q & A session after all three presentations are completed.

You will receive an information packet around Thanksgiving to prepare you for the presentation and to formulate your questions. Please read this information and be prepared.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL BUDGET MEETING:

This year our Annual Congregation Meeting to review and pass the 2018 church budget will be held immediately following the 10:30 am worship service on **December 17**. Since we need a quorum, those who are preparing the potluck luncheon for our Joint Luncheon & Children's Christmas Program should step out of the kitchen and be a part of the Congregational Budget Meeting for a brief moment. The proposed budget will be available for you to pick up in the narthex beginning Sunday, December 3.

THE GIVING TREE:

The Giving Tree in the narthex gives us the opportunity to donate any warm articles of clothing for homeless men and women in Warren. When we asked the Warren Family Mission what is needed most, they said hats and gloves and hand warmers! (I'll bet the hand warmers would be a unique and valuable item!) As we give to our brothers and sisters who seek shelter and warmth this winter, let us remember we give to Christ himself. Blessings from Judy Dodge and the Social Ministry Team!

FROM PASTOR WILLIAM D. LEITCH: We are in the season of Advent, "to come". Jesus is coming, but not here yet. We are to wait and to prepare. We are to keep watch for Jesus, but stay busy preparing.

Jesus wants us to be so busy doing his will that we might not see him come. Still, that is what pleases Jesus – to come and see us working for him as if he were right next to us.

As a small child, we visited an older couple and had supper together. As I snooped around the house and looked at all their pictures and talked to their parakeet, I heard my parents bragging about how well I work around our house and helped with chores. It was the best feeling I could ever have – to know that I pleased my parents. I was ready to go home and get to work right then.

Jesus sees our care and hard work to do his will. God is present in our lives always. I asked a highway worker candidate in an interview once, "What would you do if the crew took a break someday and it seemed like they didn't care to get back to work?" He responded, "My work glorifies God, and God is always watching." Work for this highway worker was not just a paycheck, but rather, it was his passion to do it well for the safety and security of those he maintained the roads for and more importantly – for the glory of God.

We can share this blessing with everyone around us by sharing the one for whom we work – God – and to tell them of the joy we receive knowing that we please God by our caring and our working and our doing the best we can.

Go! Tell! Make believers! That is what Jesus means when he tells us to prepare the way. That "call" is part of everything we do. We are called to tell about Jesus in everything we do. We should be looking for every opportunity that presents itself to tell about this Jesus to whom we give the glory. Pastor Bill

ST. PAUL NEWS & EVENTS

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Remembering those with medical challenges:

Debbie Bartlett, David Baudo, Elaine Benka, Ron Benka, Jerry Groves, Don Hazel, Carol Hipple, Wally Hipple, Michelle Bauman Jarzembowski, Roy Seibert, Jeff Trimble, April Williams, Andrea Wollam

Remembering those who are home bound:

Shirlee Chambers, Charles English, Margaret Halavick, Jim Illencik, Harriette Shaffer

Remembering those with special needs:

Donna Baldwin, Joe Benka, Elizabeth Campbell, Anne Cerminaro, Marty Cohol, Amber Ellis, Bryan Giocondi, Debi Houlf, Mike McMann, Anita Rayburn, Cindy Robinson, Deanna Savon, Ondine Shiau, Lisa Young

Remembering those in the Military:

Joe Baudo, Kirk Groves, Michael Maradin

COFFEE CUP GREETINGS:

Held on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month.

HOLIDAY FOOD BAGS:

100 grocery bags are distributed each month from The Pantry at Emmanuel Lutheran Church. 100 bags helping to keep hunger from local doorsteps. As the holiday season approaches, let's help by sharing some of our joy and thanksgiving with others. The Pantry could use our help with the following: Food Items: Frozen chickens, boxed mashed potatoes, boxed stuffing, jars of gravy, canned hams, canned sweet potatoes, other dry goods; Non-Food Items: toothpaste, toilet paper, shampoo, bar soap, deodorant, dish detergent. Don't want to shop and remember to bring the items to the church? We need you to be involved with your monetary donations to help us purchase chickens for each food bag. Make checks payable to St. Paul Lutheran Church with ACTION TEAM-CHICKENS on the memo line. Please make your donations from **November 5 through December 15**. This will be coordinated through a Thrivent Financial Action Team project lead by Rick Thompson of Emmanuel. Please contact Bonnie Thompson at 330-272-1400 with any questions.

JOINT CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM & LUNCHEON:

We will have a Joint Children's Christmas Program and Luncheon on **Sunday, December 17**. We will have worship service at 10:30 am, the Luncheon at 12:00 pm, followed by the Program. This is a joint program with the other Lutheran churches. Look for the sign-up sheets after Thanksgiving.

KAIROS WOMEN'S PRISON MINISTRY:

I waited a few months to write this update about the women's prison ministry because I wanted to be able to write about the whole experience of this particular ministry. The leaders deal with participants during a weekend as well as a one hour gathering once a month with new and seasoned participants. I had the opportunity to attend one of those sessions so that I could experience more how God works behind prison walls with these women. First, I would like to thank all the people at St. Paul who helped bake cookies and praying for these women. You will never know how much the participants appreciated the cookies and the fact that people they will never meet cared enough to send those cookies to them and to the rest of the ladies who resided within the walls of this facility. The cookies you baked were emblems of God's love and the love that you had for others because you love God. Each person who prayed for the participants had a link in a colorful paper chain. This chain was wrapped around the room and the realization that all of these men and women prayed for them each hour gave these ladies a sense of the love that God has for them. At the end of the weekend there was a ceremony for them and these ladies walked with this long flowing paper chain from the meeting room to another building for the ceremony. It was truly an amazing feeling for all of us who watched this and one could feel the presence of God and of God's love. The weekend itself was truly a moving experience. There was much laughter and many tears. Some of these ladies knew about God as a punisher, but did not know God as someone who loved and cared

for them. And some did not know God at all. By the end of the weekend, they felt loved and forgiven for their sins. Isn't that what we search and crave for ourselves? Sometimes we may not feel worthy to be loved or forgiven, but we know God and Jesus and that Jesus died for us and through his death we are forgiven. It was a gift for me to see this act of love and forgiveness for these women. I learned a lot from these ladies. One important lesson is that they are no different than me and, as a Christian, I face the same issues they do. At times it is challenging to be a Christian and to do what God and Jesus want us to do as a disciple. I was also reminded that being a Christian means I love God and when I do Kairos Ministry I belong to a larger community – the whole catholic church – as our Apostles' Creed states. This type of ministry is ecumenical – all of us do this because we love God and we follow Jesus and believe in the Holy Spirit. Whenever Kairos gathers we gather as one body of Christ. Each of us have different roles, but we are as one. God's love does go everywhere! Shalom, Pr. Linda Murray

2017 FLOWERS AND MEDITATION CANDLES:

Weeks are still available for purchase, dedicated to your special intentions. The meditation candle is \$5.00 and flowers are \$30.00 for two vases. **Please use an Order Envelope and PREPAY your order at the time that you sign the flower and candle chart. PAYMENT ENVELOPES ARE BY THE FLOWER CHART.** On weeks where there is no paid order, the church will display silk flowers to the Glory of God. Please sign up for your special weeks while they are available.

SPLASH TODAY:

Donations are always warmly welcomed, and with your continued support, we will be able to sustain this valuable ministry to young families.

GRIEF MINISTRY:

Part of the Social Committee is Grief Ministry. Joyce Osborn (330-372-2136) is spearheading this ministry with Pr. Winters' and God's guidance and help. When a loved one dies, Joyce sends a set of four books called "Journeying through Grief" throughout the first year. Each book describes the issues and feelings that a person tends to encounter at various points of grief and the books offer suggestions on handling them. If Pastor Winters or Joyce can be of any help or if you have any questions during a time of grief, please contact either of them.

DUE TO GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS:

In the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), churches and clergy can no longer make written or oral public announcements of health information regarding our members. Thus, unless specifically requested by a member to share other information, we are only able to indicate where a person is hospitalized or that they have been discharged.

BIRTHDAYS:

- 2 = Jordan Eaton
- 5 = Gabriel Baumgartner & Olivia Colarich
- 8 = Caitlyn DeMaska, George Holko, Jr., & Grace Shiau
- 9 = Don Hazel & David Maurice
- 12 = George Danes, Eileen Smith, Renee Stewart, & Sarah Wilson
- 13 = Elizabeth Chapin & Anna Peterson
- 14 = Kyle Rhine
- 15 = David Barbutes & Ellen Trimbur
- 17 = Terry Ceplecci
- 18 = Glenn Cary, Roger Peterson, & Harriette Shaffer

- 20 = Owen Bachinger, Mary Chatfield, Spencer Moorhead, Kristina Truhan, & Taylor Williams
- 22 = Eric Brown & Dale Whaley
- 25 = Mary Bittler, Lois Kaye, Susan Pasku, & Joshua Sarko
- 27 = Robert Lampson
- 29 = Jessica E. Hipple & Debra Holko
- 30 = Colleen Aurand & John Lacy
- 31 = Lisa Thirion

ANNIVERSARIES:

- 18 = McCleary, William & Teresa
- 24 = Hipple, Waldo & Carol

ST. PAUL SERVANTS FOR DECEMBER 2017

Greeters

12/03 The Dodge Family
12/10 The Dodge Family
12/17 June & Kelly Hutchison
12/24 Terry & Brenda Cephlecci
12/31 June & Kelly Hutchison

Lectors

12/03 Georgia Mikola
12/10 Drew Thirion
12/17 Rachel Skoczylas
12/24 Marty Maurice
12/31 Marty Maurice

Flower Delivery

12/03 Peggy Skoczylas
12/10 Diana Bauman
12/17 Judy Muehlbauer
12/24 Joanne Santucci
12/31 June & Kelly Hutchison

Refer to the sheet in the Sacristy for deliveries. Mark the date of delivery opposite the person's name on the sheet. Thank you.

Communion Assistants

12/03 Peggy Skoczylas
12/10 Barb Basalyga
12/17 Debbie Groves
12/24 Diana Bauman
12/31 Georgia Mikola

Acolytes 10:30 service: (agreed dates by parish youth)

12/03 Ean Dodge
12/10 Tori Muehlbauer
12/17 Evan Davis
12/24 Chelsea Moorhead; Spencer Moorhead - Crucifer
12/31 Ethan Dodge

Acolytes: Please be present ten minutes before the service begins.

If you are unable to acolyte as scheduled, please trade with one of the other acolytes and notify Christine Mymo – 330-647-2913. Thank you for your help! We count on you to be here!

Ushers

12/03 Jerry & Carole Null
12/10 Jerry & Carole Null
12/17 Barb Basalyga & Debbie Cravotta
12/24 Barb Basalyga & Debbie Cravotta
12/31 Barb Basalyga & Debbie Cravotta

Church Closing

Diana Bauman

Visitor Notes

Jean Maurice

NEWS FROM THE SHARED MINISTRY

Emmanuel Clothes Closet...The Clothes Closet is open every Tuesday at 9:00 am. In need of: autumn and winter clothes (children & adults), 35 gallon black garbage bags, gallon zip lock bags, toilet tissue, deodorant, lotions, bar soap, dish soap, and all baby needs.

Emmanuel Shopping Cart Needs for December...Instant potatoes, canned sweet potatoes, stuffing mix, gravy (jar or mix), Vienna sausages, canned fruit, cracker snacks, cans of food with pop top lids for easy opening.

Living Lord Card Class... Join us for a card-making class on **Thursday, December 7**, in the Activity Room. We will be making 4 cards. Our theme will be "Christmas cards/winter cards. Classes will be at 2:00 pm and 6:00 pm. The cost is \$12.00. Please bring adhesives like double-stick tape and liquid glue. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board. The deadline for signing up is Sunday, December 3. Emmanuel and St. Paul members are welcome to join us – call Lynne Walters at 330-856-9689 to get signed up!

Living Lord Sign Language Classes...American Sign Language Classes will be held at Living Lord for adults and children (great for hard of hearing folks, too). Class will be held on Dec. 13. Classes run from 6:00 to 8:00 pm and the cost is \$75.00. Please contact Pam Beish at pamelabeish302@gmail.com or at 330-646-1637 if you are interested in taking these classes.

Living Lord December Fellowship... We will have Fellowship on **Sunday, December 17**, after both services. There will also be Fellowship after the 7:00 pm service on Christmas Eve.

Living Lord Angel Tree...We can help make Christmas a special time for area children. Our Angel Tree will be up on **Sunday, December 3**. Stop by the tree, choose an angel, sign them out, and have fun shopping! We will have 20 children to buy for. All gifts must be returned UNWRAPPED by **Sunday, December 10**, with the angel tag attached. If you have any questions, please contact Tootie Rogers at 330-545-1135. If you are unable to be in church on December 3 and would like to participate, please call Tootie and she will mail you an angel.

From Living Lord's Parish Nurse, Dora Muller...*"I can't control everything in my life, but I can control what I put in my body..."*

With the holidays upon us, the overeating marathon is in full swing. All the good intentions of self-control and healthy choices are forgotten in the name of rich food and celebrations. This does not mean that the end of year celebration should be boring and bland. We all know that a typical holiday meal is laden with fat and sugar. Our arteries start to groan at the site of luscious dishes, and our pancreas and the whole body go into overdrive with off the chart glucose levels. The result is weight gain and an increase in cholesterol and blood sugar levels, which can lead to cardiovascular disease, arthritis, diabetes, and low self-esteem. Your holiday celebration doesn't have to be boring and mean that we have to deprive our bodies of special dishes. We need to approach this holiday season with moderation, making healthy choices, and balancing our diets to enhance our health while still enjoying the company of loved ones, friends, and co-workers. Instead of heavy emphasis on baking and exchanging sweets, so popular in the region, we can enjoy being together, volunteering our time to those who are lonely, and we should enjoy the outdoor activities to help burn calories. And, when it's time to share a table together, let's choose less caloric drinks, although a little eggnog is allowed, and we should practice everything in moderation. Remember, this is the season to share goodwill and spread happiness, not necessarily the season to load up with an unhealthy diet. With a few modifications, the holiday season can be the beginning of a more desirable and healthier life style.