



The Word "E-edition" The Newsletter of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church

"Joyful and Triumphant"

Volume 2025, Issue XII

December 2025



Each month the pastors of our LCMS churches in southwest Iowa come together for a "Circuit Meeting." One of the things we do at these meetings is study the upcoming texts that we will have in church in the week or weeks to come. Inevitably, when we have our meeting in November or December, the pastors will comment on the nature of the Gospel readings during these months. At both the end of the Church Year and the very beginning, many Gospel texts focus on the time of our Lord's return. "How should we preach on such similar texts at both the end of the Church Year as well as the beginning?" the pastors ask. If you've thought this before, you're not alone!

Well, the structure of the Church Year is like a book. Many times, the book's beginning foreshadows its end. This happens with the Church Year. At the beginning of the year we reflect on what the year is all about, and ultimately, what will happen at the end. Once that picture is painted, then we get focused on the matters at hand. So at the beginning of the year we remind ourselves that everything we will be talking about in terms of Christ and His Church relate to His return and our lives together in the "new creation."

So, when our pastor's ask questions about similar texts at different times of the Church Year, we often answer explaining the themes of those times of the Church Year. During the last days of the Church Year we focus on the reality of Jesus' second return and the glories of the life to come. That will be an accomplished fact. We can plan on it! During



*Albrecht Durer's famous woodcut of
Jesus' return in judgement.*

Advent, we reflect on our lives lived in the present knowing that even as Jesus has promised to come in the flesh as a baby in Bethlehem, and to come again one day in glory, He even comes now to us in Word and Sacrament. So the present and future "coming" is an ongoing promise of God and a source of joy and comfort during this season and every season.

"**Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending**" is our Advent hymn of the season. Interestingly, it, like many other hymns, can be used at the beginning of the Church Year and at the end. The hymn focuses on Christ's glorious second coming, using imagery of judgment and triumph. This same imagery however, perfectly frames the start of the Church Year by helping us see that the baby in the manger is in fact the King who will be the same one coming to set all things right, blending themes of the birth of Christ and the second coming of Christ. Used at the beginning of the Church Year, the hymn helps us realize that Jesus' birth is just the beginning of what God will accomplish through His Son, building anticipation for Christ's return as King, contrasting the vulnerability of His first coming with the majesty of His second.

Interestingly, many questions that congregations and pastors ask about our faith are answered in our hymns. This is one reason we prize hymns so much as St. Paul's pastors. They offer us another way to grow in our faith and confess that same faith! May you be blessed this Adventide to learn Jesus more and more through Bible, Hymnal and Catechism.

+Pastor Sherrill

2025 Christ Academy Quiz Bowl I

The first Christ Academy Quiz Bowl of the 2025-2026 season was held on Wednesday evening, November 19th. Our Co-Hosts Pastor "Alex Trebek" Frank, Pastor "Ken Jennings" Sherrill, and Jeremiah "Ryan Seacrest" Sherrill, provided several rounds of questions, Pictionary, name the "play dough" design, word scrambles. The teams were the seventh & eighth grade, high school, and adults. Competition was fierce but fun between the three groups. In the end the adults narrowly edged the high schoolers for the win by one point. It was a fun way to recap the first third of the year in Christ Academy with a review of the subjects studied in class. Even your Head Elder was stumped (and had the look to prove it, thank you to Pastor Frank for the picture) with having to draw the high priest Melchizedek during the Pictionary round. The next Christ Academy Quiz Bowl, will be held on Wednesday, January 14th. This Quiz Bowl will include the 5th & 6th grade class. So come join us for an evening of learning and fun on Wednesday evening, January 14th. Below are a few pictures from Quiz Bowl I.



Important Upcoming Dates

	December
December 3, 2025 5pm 6:30pm	Wednesday Christ Academy Advent Worship Service
December 5, 2025 6:30pm	Friday Music Conservatory Recital & Reception
December 6, 2025 10:00am	Saturday Music Conservatory Recital & Reception
December 10, 2025 5pm 6:30pm	Wednesday Christ Academy Advent Worship Service
December 14, 2025 4pm	Sunday Advent Lessons with Carols & Chili Supper
December 17, 2025 11:00am 4:30pm	Wednesday SPLECC Christmas Program Christ Academy & Caroling to Shut-ins
December 24, 2025 7:00pm	Wednesday Christmas Eve Service of Light
December 25, 2025 10:00am	Thursday Christmas Day Divine Worship Service
December 31, 2025 7:00pm	Wednesday New Year's Eve Divine Worship Service
January 2026	
January 7, 2026 5pm	Wednesday Christ Academy Resumes
January 18, 2026 4pm	Sunday 2025-2026 Organ Recital Series II & Reception - Featuring: Rev. Kantor Timothy Frank
January 25, 2026 12:30pm	Sunday St. Paul's Annual Meeting & Dinner - Church Undercroft

Hymn of the Season: Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending (LSB 336)



1 Lo! He comes with clouds de - scend - ing,
 2 Ev - 'ry eye shall now be - hold Him
 3 Those dear to - kens of His pas - sion
 4 Yea, a - men, let all a - dore Thee,



Once for ev - 'ry sin - ner slain;
 Robed in glo - rious maj - es - ty;
 Still His daz - zling bod - y bears,
 High on Thine e - ter - nal throne;



Thou - sand thou - sand saints at - tend - ing
 Those who set at naught and sold Him,
 Cause of end - less ex - ul - ta - tion
 Sav - ior, take the pow'r and glo - ry,



Swell the tri - umph of His train:
 Pierced and nailed Him to the tree,
 To His ran - somed wor - ship - ers.
 Claim the king - dom as Thine own.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -
 Deep - ly wail - ing, deep - ly wail - ing, deep - ly
 With what rap - ture, with what rap - ture, with what
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -



lu - ia! Christ the Lord re - turns to reign.
 wail - ing, Shall their true Mes - si - ah see.
 rap - ture Gaze we on those glo - rious scars!
 lu - ia! Thou shalt reign, and Thou a - lone!

Acts 1:9-11 ⁹ And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. ¹⁰ And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, ¹¹ and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

Revelation 1:5b-7 To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood ⁶ and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. ⁷ Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen.

Text and tune: Public domain

"The hymn concerns the final return of Christ, bringing both judgment and redemption. In stanza 1, the fulfillment of the promise made at the ascension is in view, the promise not just to return, but to return in the same manner (via the clouds) in which Jesus ascended. In stanza 2, Jesus is the one who returns in the fullness of His exalted glory. Even those who despised and rejected Him in His humiliation will have no choice but to acknowledge Him as the true Messiah, the heaven-sent Savior of all (Revelation 1:7) And yet, as stanza 3 reminds us, the holy wounds marking His suffering and death remain to be seen by all. We recall Jesus' disciples, especially Thomas, who marveled at the Savior's post-resurrection appearances and who beheld His wounds for themselves (John 20:28).

"Throughout the hymn, images from Revelation and the apocalyptic prophets abound; for example, the account in Revelation 7:9-12 of the great heavenly multitude singing the praises of the Lamb to whom salvation belongs. The hymn concludes with the confession that the day is near when what is not now visible to us, His glorious reign over all things, will finally be seen by all, and His elect children will receive it and rejoice in it."

- Kim L. Scharff, Lutheran Service Book Companion to the Hymns, Vol I, Concordia: 2019, pp. 18-19.

St. Paul's Lutheran Early Childhood Center —December News



Here at the early childhood center we are extremely blessed.

Pictured to the left is a statue of Jesus and the children given to us by our beloved friend the late Pastor Tews. It is the first thing the children see when they enter the office to check-in or out for the day. Here they can see and touch Jesus, as if they can climb right up on his lap as well. It's a beautiful sight to witness.

This is our greatest blessing, to teach and proclaim the love of Jesus to the little children. For so many of the people that gather within these walls, this is their church, where they hear the truth of God's Word and learn with awe and wonder of His mighty works through creation, Noah, Abraham, Moses, John the Baptist and the gift of Jesus who came to us as an infant, a child just like them.

We are blessed with teachers who get down on the children's level, read with them, explore with them, learn with them, pray with them, and model the love of Jesus.

We pray for God's blessings and provision, that we may continue to proclaim Christ crucified for all within these walls, in whatever shape and form he leads us in.

Soli Deo Gloria, Becca Heinicke

(Pictured are the children participating in our annual Thanksgiving Feast)



St. Paul's Lutheran Music Conservatory —December News

Concordia Nebraska Vocal Jazz Concert a Success!



On Monday, November 24, over 290 people gathered at the Frank Fauble Theater at Iowa Western Community College to hear a special concert hosted by St. Paul's Music Conservatory. The Concordia Nebraska Vocal Jazz Choir was joined for one of the songs by the Southwest Iowa Home-school High School Choir. Before the concert, SPMC studio teacher Micah Fusselman and two of his sons provided lobby music. It was a wonderful evening highlighting God's gift of music. A special thanks to those who supported the event and attended. On Tuesday morning, Concordia students gathered at St. Paul's from their stay at their host families. Choir member David Eatherton even got to try out our organ! Pastor Sherrill gathered the choir before departure for prayer and a hymn. Thank you to those who hosted students in your homes!

Join us for our Christmas Recitals December 5 & 6!



**St. Paul's
Music Conservatory**
Where Music Serves

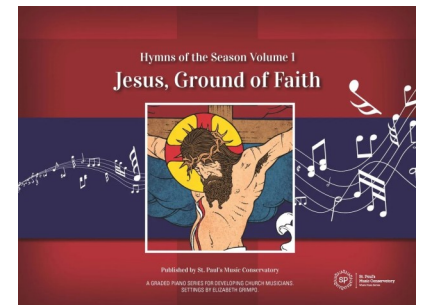


The Word - St. Paul's Mission - David's Harp +

A Job Well Done!



In 2015 St. Paul's congregation was considering calling an Associate Pastor. That Pastor would work with me in order to serve God's people at St. Paul's in Word and Sacrament ministry, and along with that, serve our growing Music Conservatory as Administrator, and help Dr. C in the music department. After some searching and praying, Pastor Frank and his family came to St. Paul's fulfilling this call! One of the many "first things" that Pastor Frank and I did together, in 2017, was set out to work on a dream of mine, and publish our first "Hymns of the Season" Piano book. This music book would allow children within our congregation to play in the music studio the same hymns that they would sing in children's choir and each Sunday in the Divine Service. Pastor Frank and I had no publishing experience. Neither of us had ever done a project like this before. However, I had a vision and he had terrific musical ability, a keen eye for details, and a willing heart and attitude. Together we collaborated with an artist and a musician and put together our first music book: **"Jesus Ground of Faith."**

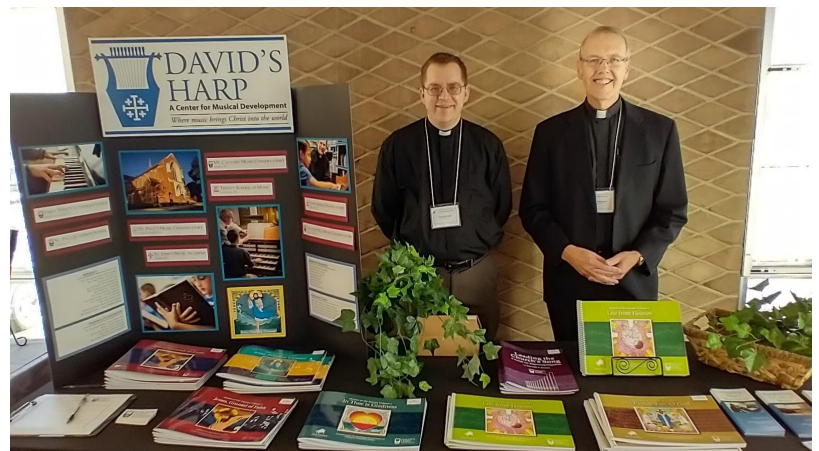


Since then, we have visioned together, and Pastor Frank has taken the reigns, providing the general project management and editorial oversight for over 20 different musical resources for St. Paul's to use along with the Church at large, now through the RSO we established along the way, you know as "David's Harp." Today, children and adults alike, all over the world, are playing out of musical resources that have been produced within the walls of St. Paul's Lutheran Church and Music Conservatory, specifically, Pastor Frank's office!

Recently, Pastor Frank made the decision to pass the baton within the David's Harp organization. As David's Harp grows, it will require more time from the Director of Resource Development. Committed to his various roles at St. Paul's, his family and other interests, Pastor Frank will hand off his position to another able bodied LCMS musician. It has been such a joy to work with Pastor Frank as Executive Director and Director of Resource Development for David's Harp. Our work together has stimulated a movement within our church body that is landmark and appreciated by many. To illustrate this fact, I was told at the Good Shepherd Institute that the David's Harp resources are even being featured in someone's Doctoral Dissertation! Please join me in thanking Pr. Frank for his time, efforts, energy and passion for music in relation to his work as David's Harp's first Director of Resource Development! At the same time, please also thank Pastor Frank for his focused commitment to his family, our congregation and ministry here in Council Bluffs. We appreciate you Tim! +Pastor Sherrill



This picture was captured of Pr. Frank playing organ at the recent LWML national convention in Omaha last summer. Pastor Frank was quoted as saying, "One of my greatest joys is leading the people of God, few or many, in a robust singing of God's Word." Through his efforts, now the next generation can begin to lead God's people in similar ways at much earlier ages!



Pastor Frank displaying the David's Harp resources together with Rev. Jim Holowach at a past Good Shepherd Institute on the campus of the seminary in Ft. Wayne, IN.



St. Paul's Lutheran Church Statistics November 2025 St. Paul's Dashboard

November 2025 Attendance 8:00	622
November 2025 Attendance 10:45	363
November 2025 Attendance Seasonal Services	73
November 2025 Total In-Person Attendance	1,058
November 2025 Sunday Facebook Views	1,395
November 2025 Sunday YouTube Views	457
November 2025 Seasonal Facebook Views	204
November 2025 Seasonal YouTube Views	35
November 2025 Total Online Views	2,091
Total November 2025	3,149

ST. PAUL'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

239 Frank St
Council Bluffs, IA 51503

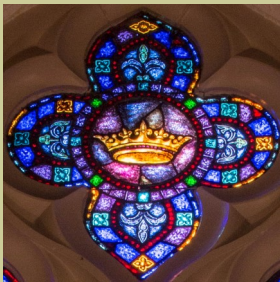
Phone: 712-322-4729
E-mail:
splccboffice@splccb.org

We're on the web
stpaulscouncilbluffs.org



St. Paul's Congregation
by the numbers

YouTube Subscribers	215
Facebook Followers	1,000
Instagram Followers	13
X Followers	6
Congregation Members	564
Households	256



St. Paul's Lutheran Early
Childhood Center
by the numbers

Students	42
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St. Paul's Lutheran Church November Income & Expense*

St. Paul's	November 2025	2025 Year to Date
Total Income	\$ 87,917.80	\$ 476,578.88
Total Expenses	\$ 43,334.52	\$ 455,242.38
Income Less Expense	\$ 44,583.28	\$ 21,336.50

St. Paul's Music Conservatory November Income & Expense*

We are working on an accounting issue during the cutover to Music Staff and the credit card processing vendor. Once this issue is resolved we will again post the monthly and yearly income and expense report starting in December.

St. Paul's Lutheran Early Childhood Center November Income & Expense*

SPLECC	November 2025	2025 Year to Date
Total Income	\$ 33,166.90	\$ 418,743.20
Total Expenses	\$ 38,876.38	\$ 449,413.47
Income Less Expense	\$ 5,709.48	\$ 30,670.27

* This is a snapshot of the income and expense report to as of 30-NOV-2025.

The Word - Additional News & Notes

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Technology - Update

With Christmas almost here, this might be a good time to repost this news article from earlier this year regarding updating your phone contacts to include the St. Paul's Member 360 Voice and Text phone numbers for incoming announcements. By updating your contact lists with the numbers below, this will stop the caller identification from showing **POSSIBLE SPAM CALL** or **UNKNOWN INCOMING NUMBER**.

Select your Contacts icon

Scroll until you locate your St. Paul's contact profile

Select the edit icon

Add Phone & enter the number:

69089

Add Phone Number Type:

Select Create custom type and type:

Important TEXT Message

Save your changes. If you have not included the voice announcement number you can follow the steps below to add the number into your contacts.

Select your Contacts icon

Select: + Add

Add contact name:

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Add Phone number:

18552487295

Add Phone Number Type:

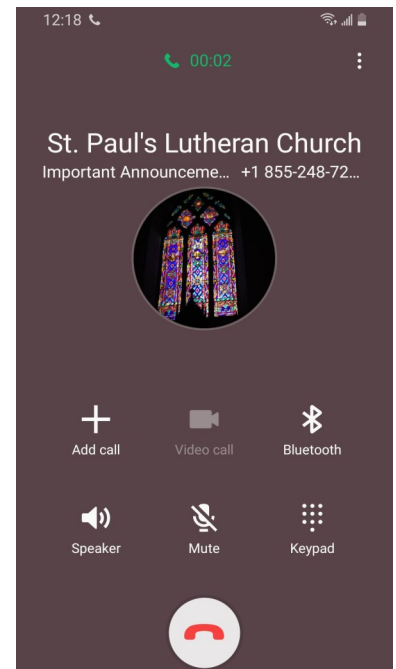
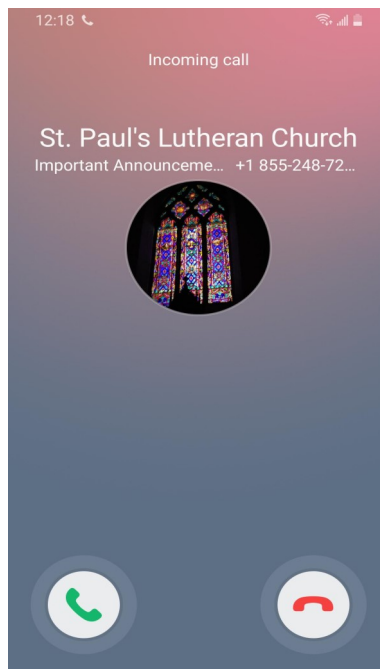
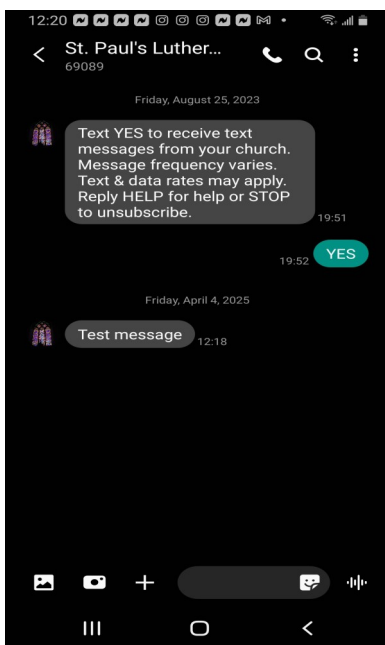
Select Create custom type, and

type: **Important Announcement**

Save Contact

If you have not provided St. Paul's with your mobile number, please contact the Church Office at 712-322-4729, and Hedi will update your profile.

Below are screen shots of the text message invite, response of YES, and a test message sent from Member 360 (left picture), The middle picture and picture to the right show an incoming Voice Message and answer showing the Caller ID display with St. Paul's Message number. If you would like to test your new contact and validate, contact the church office at 712-322-4729, or Bob Finke, and ask for a test message to be sent to your mobile number.



Our Family - December Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

December 1

Jim Petersen

December 2

Kathleen Kruse

December 3

Taylor Tague

December 4

Linda Brand

December 7

Elizabeth Bowerman

December 8

William French Jr
Jonathan Schulz

December 9

Amanda Lane
Randall Milbrath
Jamie Schnoor

December 11

Jan Goodin

December 12

Joanne Raymond

December 14

Holly Miller

December 15

Megan Maurice

December 16

Greg Montgomery

December 20

Emma Cundiff
Sandra Frank

December 22

Kylie Olsen

December 24

Kelsey Dragon
Stephen Klinge
Carter Shockey

December 25

Our Lord and Savior

December 26

Landon Olsen
Benjamin Waggoner

December 27

Jonathan Sherrill

December 28

A. Overgard

December 29

Jacob Dix
Theodore Kehm Jr

December 30

Phily Raymond
Diane Rounds

Anniversaries

December 1

Robert & Karen Burns

December 11

Jacob & Amy Eyberg

December 17

Dan & Linda Hanusa

December 28

Joshua & Emily Fingerhut
Tristan & C.C. Harris

2025 Church Pictorial Directory Still Available

The 2025 St. Paul's Lutheran Church Pictorial Directory is still available to pick up. You may pick up your directory in the Church Office, during normal business hours Monday – before or after Christ Academy, or on Sunday morning between Worship Services. To help defray the cost of the directory, we are asking for a \$15.00 donation. If you would like a copy of your family, or individual picture, please let the Church Office know, and we will send an email with the photographs.

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church 2025 Pictorial Directory



St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church
239 Frank St.
Council Bluffs, IA 51503

*My Church! my Church! my dear old Church!
My fathers' and my own!
On Prophets and Apostles built,
And Christ, the Corner-stone!
All else beside, by storm or tide,
May yet be overthrown;
But not my Church - my dear old Church -
My fathers' and my own!*

If your name, birthday, or anniversary is not on the list, or is incorrect, please contact the Church Office at 712-322-4729 or email @ splccboffice@splccb.org, or scan the QR code here.



Those Who Serve - December 2025

December 3, 2025		Advent
Wednesday Evening	6:30 p.m. Evening Service	
Acolyte	Emily Escritt	
Elder	Bob Finke	
Greeter(s)	Ushers	
Ushers	Bob Finke, Dan Hanusa, , ,	
Opening/Closing Church	Ushers	

December 7, 2025		Populus Zion	
Sunday	8:00 a.m. Divine Service	10:45 a.m. Divine Service	
Acolyte	Daniel Frank	Layla Knipe	
Elder	Kyle Johnson	Dan Hanusa	
Greeter(s)	Ushers		Ushers
Ushers	Ed Frank , Samuel Frank, Dan Wurdeman, Miles Wurdeman, Greg Montgomery	Donnie Bloom, Bob Finch, Geno Velasco, Sam Raymond, Max Raymond	
Opening/Closing Church	Bob Finke	Ushers	

December 10, 2025		Advent
Wednesday Evening	6:30 p.m. Evening Service	
Acolyte	Ethan Wurdeman	
Elder	Bob Finke	
Greeter(s)	Ushers	
Ushers	Bob Finke, Ed Frank , , ,	
Opening/Closing Church	Ushers	

December 14, 2025		Gaudete	
Sunday	8:00 a.m. Divine Service	10:45 a.m. Divine Service	
Acolyte	Everett Farrell	Ellie Knipe	
Elder	Matt Escritt	Eric Nelson	
Greeter(s)	Ushers		Ushers
Ushers	Luke Batterman, Tim Salin, Peter Heinicke, Tim Johnson, Bill Kruse	Dave Hansen, Tim Hansen, Carter Shockey, James Villarreal, Ed Frank	
Opening/Closing Church	Bob Finke	Ushers	

December 14, 2025		Advent Lessons in Carols	
Sunday	4:00 p.m. Afternoon Service		
Acolyte	Jonathan Sherrill		
Elder	Dan Hanusa		
Greeter(s)	Ushers		
Ushers	Ed Frank , Sam Raymond, Jeremiah Sherrill, Dan Wurdeman, James Villarreal		
Opening/Closing Church	Ushers		

Those Who Serve - December 2025

December 17, 2025	Advent	
Wednesday Evening	6:30 p.m. Evening Service	
Acolyte	Brookelynn Adams	
Elder	Bob Finke	
Greeter(s)	Ushers	
Ushers	Ed Frank , Dan Hanusa , , ,	
Opening/Closing Church	Ushers	
December 21, 2025	Rorate Coeli	
Sunday	8:00 a.m. Divine Service	10:45 a.m. Divine Service
Acolyte	Mark Johnson	Penelope Bellamy
Elder	Bob Finke	Andy Raymond
Greeter(s)	Ushers	Ushers
Ushers	Greg Montgomery, Jeff Thomas, Miles Wurdeman, Dan Wurdeman, Derek Stephenson	Tim Hansen, Dave Hansen, Bob Finch, Carter Shockey, Geno Velasco
Opening/Closing Church	Bob Finke	Ushers
December 24, 2025	Christmas Eve Service of Light	
Wednesday Evening	7:00 p.m. Worship Service	
Acolyte	Daniel Frank	
Elder	Kyle Johnson	
Greeter(s)	Ushers	
Ushers	Jeff Thomas, Sam Raymond, Dan Hanusa, Joel Sherrill, Bill Kruse	
Opening/Closing Church	Ushers	
December 25, 2025	The Nativity of Our Lord	
Thursday Morning	10:00 a.m. Divine Service	
Acolyte	Jonathan Sherrill	
Elder	Bob Finke	
Greeter(s)	Ushers	
Ushers	Ed Frank , Samuel Frank, Dan Hanusa, Donnie Bloom, James Villarreal	
Opening/Closing Church	Ushers	
December 28, 2025	The Holy Innocents & Martyrs	
Sunday	8:00 a.m. Divine Service	10:45 a.m. Divine Service
Acolyte	Carson DeLong	Malaika Lusajo
Elder	Matt Escritt	Bob Finke
Greeter(s)	Ushers	Ushers
Ushers	Bob Finke, Samuel Frank, Ed Frank , Luke Batterman, Tim Salin	Nathanael Sherrill, Jeremiah Sherrill, Joel Sherrill, Isaac Sherrill, Max Raymond
Opening/Closing Church	Bob Finke	Ushers
December 31, 2025	New Year's Eve	
Wednesday Evening	7:00 p.m. Divine Service	
Acolyte	Jonathan Frank	
Elder	Bob Finke	
Greeter(s)	Ushers	
Ushers	Bob Finke, Ed Frank , Samuel Frank, Joel Sherrill, Dan Hanusa	
Opening/Closing Church	Ushers	

Our Family - January Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

- January 2**
Karen Hardick
Penny Rollins
- January 3**
Brody Adams
Theodore Fingerhut
Jayne McIlrath
- January 5**
Olivia Merksick

- January 6**
Zoey Markham
Kyle McKee

- January 7**
Martha Spetman

- January 8**
Melissa DeLong
Marcia Timm

- January 9**
Kyle Johnson

- January 10**
Amelia Guill
Owen Shockey

- January 12**
Bradley Adams
Bryanna Adams
Nathan Sherrill
Jenny Trail

- January 13**
Jackson Bogacz
Kori Nelson
Lucie Roth

- January 14**
Alivia Oliver
Emry Trail

- January 15**
Liam Olsen

- January 16**
Eden Ferris
Tess Penney
Stella Raymond

- January 17**
Dickie Leu

- January 18**
Cindy Goodin
William Kruse
Susan Tews

- January 21**
Brandon Griffen
Timothy Mathisen
Vicki McCallan

- January 24**
Cara Ireland

- January 25**
Nathan Storey

- January 27**
Amy Kuper

- January 28**
Ashley Moreno
Jolene Stiles

- January 30**
Candace O'Toole
Shaylie Gardner

- January 31**
Kathleen Seipold
Anna Sherrill

Anniversaries

- January 1**
Terry & Karin Smothers

- January 2**
Philip & Priscilla Oliver

- January 11**
Adam & Laura Kort

- January 14**
Dave & Mary Johannes

- January 17**
Ted & Gloria Kehm Jr.

- January 29**
George & Merna Kellogg

If your name, birthday, or anniversary is not on the list, or is incorrect, please contact the Church Office at 712-322-4729

or email @ spiccboffice@spiccb.org, or scan the QR code here.



2026 St. Paul's Event Calendars

The final touches to St. Paul's 2026 Event Calendar are being applied and will be available by Sunday, December 14th. The calendars will be available in the Church Narthex, and Church Lounge.

2026 Events Calendar



St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church
239 Frank St.
Council Bluffs, IA 51503
Ph. 712-322-4729 email: spiccboffice@spiccb.org
www.stpaulscongregation.org



February 2026

Day	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1							
2							
3							
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Season	Date	Festival	Old Testament or Feast	Psalm	Epistle	Gospel
Christmas	Jan 17	Circumcision and Name of Jesus (New Year's Day)	Num. 6:22-27	Psalm 8	Gal. 3:23-29	Luke 2:21
	Jan 4	Saints, After Christmas	Num. 86:1-7	Psalm 73:10-15	1 Peter 3:12-15	Mark 1:3-20
	Jan 6	The Epiphany of Our Lord	Isaiah 60:1-6	Psalm 24	Col. 3:12-17	Matt. 3:1-12
Epiphany	Jan 17	The Baptism of Our Lord	Isaiah 41:1-7 Ps. 124:1-7	Psalm 85	1 Cor. 1:30-31	Matt. 3:13-17
	Jan 18	Saints, after the Epiphany	Ps. 124:1-7 Isaiah 52:1-5	Psalm 87 or Psalm 111	1 Peter 1:12-14	John 1:22-23
	Jan 19	The Confession of St. Peter	Isaiah 55:1-3	Psalm 138:1-3	2 Peter 1:1-6	Mark 8:27-30
Jan 21	The Transfiguration of Our Lord	Ex. 34:29-35 or Ex. 33:18	Psalm 7	2 Peter 1:16-18	Mark 9:2-8	
Pre-Lent	Feb. 1	Septuagesima	Ex. 17:1-7	Psalm 91:1-9	1 Cor. 13:8-13	Mark 10:35
	Feb. 8	Sextagesima	Isaiah 55:1-3	Psalm 86	2 Cor. 12:12-13	Luke 8:9-15
	Feb. 15	Quinquagesima	1 Sam. 16:1-13 or Psalm 138:1-3	Psalm 100 or Psalm 138	1 Cor. 13:1-13	Luke 10:35-42
Ash Wednesday	Feb. 18	Ash Wednesday	Isaiah 55:1-3 Isaiah 61:1-3	Psalm 51:1-11 (14-17)	2 Peter 1:3-11	Mark 11:18-21
	Feb. 22	Fourth of Lent (Remembrance)	1 Sam. 17:40-45	Psalm 124:1-7 (18-21)	Mark 8:14-18	Mark 4:35-41
Lent	March 1	Sunday in Lent (Remembrance)	Gen. 12:1-12	Psalm 111	1 Thim. 4:8-10	Mark 11:20-26
	March 8	Third of Lent (Feast)	Ex. 8:18-28 or Ex. 20:2-12	Psalm 124:1-7 (18-21)	1 Peter 2:1-6	John 5:1-9
	March 15	Sunday in Lent (Feast)	Ex. 10:1-13	Psalm 8	1 Peter 2:1-6	Luke 11:14-20

December Recipe of the Month

Christstollen (German Christmas Bread)

Dating back to the 1300's the original stollen was vastly different. They were made from mostly oats, water and turnip oil since the Catholic Church forbade the use of eggs, milk, and butter during Advent. The Elector of Saxony petitioned the Pope repeatedly for over 40 years before receiving the famous "Butter Letter" from the Pope in 1490, allowing the ruling family only the use of butter during that time of year. All others had to make a donation of gold toward the construction of the Freiberg Cathedral if they wanted to avoid fines. This ruling continued until about 1527 when Saxony became a protestant state. Since then, Stollen has changed over the years into a flaky, moist, and divinely flavorful bread. German Christmas Stollen are not the often laughed at fruit cake. They are a yeast bread sweetened with dried fruits and nuts. The shape and powdered sugar coating also reminds us of the swaddled Baby Jesus.



Prep Time: 3 hours Cook Time: 40 minutes Total Time: 3 hours 40 minutes Servings: 24

Equipment (very handy, but not required): Stand mixer and dough hook, thermometer

Ingredients:

- 1 cup lukewarm whole milk
- 3 teaspoons active dry yeast
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 4 to 4 1/2 cups all-purpose flour/ more as needed
- 1 large egg + 2 large egg yolks
- 3/4 cup unsalted butter (1 1/2 sticks) , softened
- 2 teaspoons quality pure vanilla extract
- zest of one lemon
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 teaspoon ground cardamom
- 3/4 teaspoon ground mace (can substitute nutmeg)
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 8 ounces Homemade Marzipan, divided in half (can omit if preferred)
- 9 ounces raisins
- 3 ounces candied lemon peel , finely diced
- 3 ounces candied orange peel , finely diced
- 3 ounces blanched slivered/ sliced almonds , finely chopped
- 1/3 cup good dark rum (can use apple juice)
- 1 stick unsalted butter , melted
- powdered sugar for generous dusting

1. Place the raisins, candied citrus peel and almonds in a medium bowl and pour the rum over it. Stir to combine. Set aside and let the fruit mixture soak in the rum while the dough rises.
2. Stir yeast and 2 tablespoons of the sugar into lukewarm milk. Let sit in warm place 10-15 minutes until very frothy.
3. Place flour, remaining sugar, egg, egg yolks, butter, vanilla extract, lemon zest, salt, cardamom, mace and cinnamon in the bowl of a [stand mixer](#) fitted with a [dough hook](#). Add the yeast/milk mixture. Use a spoon to stir the mixture until it comes together. Knead the dough on the bread setting for 7-8 minutes. Remove the dough ball, lightly spray the bowl with a little oil, return the dough ball, cover loosely with plastic wrap and place it in a warm place to rise until nearly doubled in size, (1 1/2 -2 hours)
4. Punch down the dough and add the soaked fruit/nut mixture to the dough (it should have absorbed all the rum by now but if there is excess liquid, pour it out before adding to the dough). Using the dough hook, knead the fruit/nut mixture into the dough until combined. If dough is too wet to handle, add flour until the dough pulls away from sides of bowl.

(continued next page)

December Recipe of the Month



Christstollen Continued from page 15

5. Turn the dough out onto a floured work surface and cut into two equal halves. Press or roll each piece into an oval to about 1 inch thick. Roll each piece of marzipan into a log the length of the oval. Press gently into the middle of the dough. Fold left side of dough over to cover the marzipan, then fold right side over on top of left side so that the edge of it sits just left of the middle of the stollen. I.e., don't fold the right side all the way over to the left edge. Pinch and tuck the top and bottom ends to cover the marzipan. Use the bottom edge of your hand to press down along the length of the stollen towards the right of the center to create a divot and characteristic hump (see pic). Place on a lined baking sheet. Cover loosely with plastic wrap and let rest in a warm place for 40-60 minutes until puffy. Then pick off any raisins that are sticking out of the dough (they will burn during baking).
6. Bake in pre-heated oven at 350 degrees for 30-40 minutes or until golden. Aim for an internal temperature of 190 degrees F. Let Stollen sit for 5 minutes, then use a toothpick to poke holes all over the stollen (allows the butter to seep in), then generously brush the stollen with the melted butter while still warm. Immediately sprinkle with a generous amount of powdered sugar, rubbing it into the creases and down the sides. Let stollen cool completely. Can give it another dusting of powdered sugar once cooled if desired.
7. The stollen can be sliced and eaten now or wrapped tightly (wrap in plastic wrap then foil) and left to "ripen" in a cool place for 2 weeks. The liquid from the dried fruits will further penetrate the dough for more flavor and moisture. Stollen can also be frozen for longer storage.
8. Makes 2 large or 3 medium Stollen.

For eating, warming the slices up for a few seconds in the microwave makes the crumb nice and soft.

For easy homemade recipes for marzipan, candied lemon and candied orange , plus more pictures on how to make this recipe, go to:

[Authentic Stollen \(German Christmas Bread\) - The Daring Gourmet](#)

St. Paul's 2025 Advent & Christmas Worship Service & Special Event Dates

Advent			
Sunday	November 30	Ad Te Levai (To you, I have lifted up)	Divine Worship Service @ 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m. SS/ABC @ 9:30 a.m.
Wednesday	December 3		Christ Academy @ 5:00 p.m. w/dinner Advent Service @ 6:30 p.m.
Friday	December 5		Music Conservatory Recital @ 6:30 p.m.
Saturday	December 6		Music Conservatory Recital @ 10:00 a.m.
Sunday	December 7	Populus Zion (People of Zion)	Divine Worship Service @ 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m. SS/ABC @ 9:30 a.m.
Wednesday	December 10		Christ Academy @ 5:00 p.m. w/dinner Advent Service @ 6:30 p.m.
Sunday	December 14	Gaudete (Rejoice!)	Divine Worship Service @ 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m. SS/ABC @ 9:30 a.m. Advent Lessons in Carols @ 4:00 p.m. with chili, crackers & cinnamon rolls follow-
Wednesday	December 17		SPLECC Christmas Program @ 11:00 a.m., at SPLECC Christ Academy @ 4:30 p.m. w/soup dinner Caroling to Shut-Ins, and other Activities
Sunday	December 21	Rorate Coeli (Drop down dew, O heavens)	Divine Worship Service @ 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m. SS/ABC @ 9:30 a.m.
Christmas Eve			
Wednesday Evening	December 24	Service of Light	Christmas Eve Worship Service @ 7:00 p.m.
Christmas Day			
Thursday Morning	December 25	Nativity of Our Lord	Divine Worship Service @ 10:00 a.m.
Christmas			
Sunday	December 28	1 st Sunday After Christmas	Divine Worship Service @ 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m. SS/ABC @ 9:30 a.m.
New Year's Eve			
Wednesday Evening	December 31	New Year's Eve	Divine Worship Service @ 7:00 p.m.
Epiphany			
Sunday	January 4	Epiphany (Observed)	Divine Worship Service @ 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m. SS/ABC @ 9:30 a.m.
Sunday	January 11	The Baptism of Our Lord	Divine Worship Service @ 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m. SS/ABC @ 9:30 a.m.



Poinsettias for the Christmas Season

\$8.00 per plant

Orders due: December 14

Make checks payable to: St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Number of Plants: _____

In Memory of: _____

Or

In Honor of: _____

Given by: _____



Advent
Lessons & Carols

SUNDAY

December 14th

4:00pm

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

239 Frank St.

Council Bluffs, IA 51503

Chili Supper with Cinnamon Rolls
following in the Church Undercroft



ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH & MUSIC CONSERVATORY

2025-2026 MUSIC SERIES PIPE ORGAN DEDICATION

SUNDAY JANUARY 18TH
4:00PM



Featuring Rev. Kantor Timothy Frank,

A Program of varied repertoire highlighting the
beauty of St. Paul's organ renovated by

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Reception following in Church Undercroft

For more information:
www.splccb.org

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