



St. Paul's Lutheran
THE EPISTLE
December 2023

Advent and Christmas Greetings,

In my family, as I was growing up, my mother was the one who knew all about the family history, who was related to whom, who lived where, and who had the next birthday. She got the birthday cards out on time. In Luke's Gospel, the writer tells us who is related to Jesus in the family tree, on the male side - from father to son. Right after the story of Jesus' Baptism, the voice comes over him from heaven, "*You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.*" Then the long list of the ancestors of Jesus shows up, with Jesus being from "the son (as was thought) of Joseph..." and all the way back to Jesus being "son of Adam, son of God." The family tree works back to the beginning - to God!

God favors Mary to be the mother of Jesus - the Christ child, conceived by the Holy Spirit, and together with Joseph her husband, they raise Jesus. An angel declares Jesus to be holy, the Son of the Most High, the one who will save his people from their sins. This is God coming to us in human flesh, the incarnation, who is full of mystery and love. During Advent, we prepare for and look forward to the celebration of the birth of Christ.

Bring on the Christmas trees, sparkling lights and ornaments. Sing the carols, ring the bells, give the gifts of love. Worship the Lord with gladness! Glory to God in the Highest, a Savior is born for us who is Christ the Lord!

Merry Christmas,
Pastor Nancy

December

Birthdays

1 – Mary Schlobohm
 2 – Angie Ash
 3 – Millie Baxter
 3 – Anna Maria Chauviere
 8 - Krista Hargrove
 8 - Bailey Stevens
 8 – Billy Stevens
 12 – Kurstyn Clarke
 14 – Carly Moreno
 16 – Justin Reavis
 20 - Cody Herrington
 22 - Elaine Eschberger
 23 - Caroline Lucke
 24 - Jace Seymour
 26 – Amy Andrews
 27 – Albert Elizondo
 29 – Hannah Zarsky

Baptismal Anniversaries

9 – Kaitlin Migl
 10 – Kyle Stevens
 10 – Bailey Stevens
 10 – Billy Stevens
 12 – Nancy Simpson
 27 – Debbie Gillespie
 30 – Adrienne Stevens

Wedding Anniversaries

17 – Ed & Debbie Bakemeier
 20 – Albert & Karen Elizondo

Church Office Hours

OPEN Mon.—Thurs. 9am-3pm
 CLOSED Dec 25th– Jan 1st

Food Pantry Schedule

Thursdays at 9am while
 supplies last
 OPEN December 7, 14, 21
 CLOSED Dec. 28

Thank You

- Thank you to Hoya Ash, Kurt and Kelly Migl, and John Schlobohm for the lawn maintenance
- To Rosie Haas for keeping our flower beds looking great
- Beehive Florist for the fresh floral arrangements for worship
- To our Food Pantry volunteers for all their hard work.
- To the knitters and crocheters for the prayer shawls & hospital blankets
- To Pat Phillips for the use of his truck. And a big thank you to Bobbi Howard for loading, unloading, and driving the tables and chairs to pastor's house and back again to the church.
- To all who set up the Thanksgiving Altar
- To Bubba Gonzalez for keeping our church sign current
- To Cat Mahan for being an office Angel

Golden Group Activities Monthly Luncheon

Tuesday, December 19th @ 11:30am
Christmas Potluck held at St. Paul's
Please bring a dish to share

Signup sheets are in the Fellowship Hall. Text or email Lorrie for more info: 281-382-9770

landrews1124@gmail.com

FIRST SUNDAY CONFIRMATION CLASS

(Teaching of the Christian faith for Lutherans)

For Baptized 5th Grade & Up

Sunday, December 3rd
 9:30 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.
 (in the parlor)

Prayer Shawl & Hospital Blanket Blessing

Sun., December 10th

If you know of someone in need of a shawl please come to the church office.



Beverly Tomsic
 3311 Mission Viejo St.
 Baytown, TX 77521





Volunteers Needed!
Signup Sheet
in Fellowship
Hall

Breakfast with Santa
Sat. December 2nd
9am–11am



Eat pancakes!
Talk with Santa!
Ride the Christmas Train!
All welcome! Free!

1st Bible Milestone
Sunday, December 3rd



We will present Scarlett Rein with a Bible to mark her journey forward from Baptism to reading the Bible.



Handbell Choir will perform Christmas music Saturday, December 9th, 10am at the Lodge of Pine Creek, Baytown



The Jubilee Choir singing praises to the Lord!

Wednesday Evening Advent
"A Little Child Shall Lead Them" Series
December 6th, 13th, and 20th at 6:30pm
 Make the time we spend together during Advent special. Join us for singing, devotion, snacks, and fellowship. Please meet in the Fellowship Hall.

Advent Devotionals are available in the Narthex




Poinsettias 25 red poinsettias are available for \$10 each in honor/memory/celebration of loved ones. There is a signup sheet in the Fellowship Hall. Place your payment in the offering plate on Sunday morning. Mark your payment with the word "poinsettia."




Christmas Eve Candlelight Service Sunday December 24th at 6pm.
 Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday this year. Therefore, we will have only one service at 6:00pm. We will **NOT** meet for the 10:30am service.

Service of the Word/Hymn Sing
Sunday December 31st



We will sing hymns chosen by the congregation. Choose your favorite hymn from the ELW Hymnal. Write the name and hymn number on the slip of paper and put it in the box in the Fellowship Hall.

Adopt—A—Spot
Saturday, December 9th at 8am



Please meet at the Sterling Library to pick up trash. There is a signup sheet in the Fellowship Hall.

ELCA GOOD GIFTS

As members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), we believe that God's love in Jesus is a gift. ELCA Good Gifts is one way you can share that love with others.

An animal can make a world of difference for a family in need.

For Christmas this year, St. Paul's has chosen goats and chicks. For \$60.00 you can buy a goat and chicks—or a portion of one set, or any amount you are able to afford.

\$50 *Goat!* Fresh milk from a goat provides daily nutrition for children and their families.

\$10 *Chicks!* Ten little chicks can make a big difference.

Grab an envelope from the display in the Fellowship Hall. Place your check payable to St. Paul's Lutheran Church (with "Good Gifts" written in the memo) in the offering plate. You can also give online by going to [ELCA.org/goodgifts](https://www.elca.org/goodgifts). Gifts support ELCA World Hunger.



QCDs are a special opportunity for those 70 1/2 years old and older

You can give any amount (up to a maximum of \$100,000) per year from your traditional IRA directly to a qualified charity that is near and dear to you, such as St. Paul's Lutheran Church, ELCA ministries, and/or the ministries you specify without having to pay income taxes on the money. Gifts of any value \$100,000 or less are eligible for this benefit, and you can feel good knowing that you are making a difference at your congregation or other ministries. This popular gift option is commonly called the IRA charitable rollover, but you may also see it referred to as a Qualified Charitable Distribution, or QCD for short.

Why consider this gift?

- Your gift will be put to use today, allowing you to see the difference your donation is making.
- If you are required to take minimum distributions, you can use your gift to satisfy all or part of your Required Minimum Distribution, or RMD obligation.
- You pay no income taxes on the gift. The transfer generates neither taxable income nor a tax deduction, so you benefit even if you do not itemize your deductions.
- Since the gift doesn't count as income, it can reduce your annual income level. This may help lower your Medicare premiums and decrease the amount of Social Security that is subject to tax.

Want to know more?

Contact John Roalson,
Gift Planner with Lutheran Foundation of the Southwest,
210-325-3496 or jroalson@lfsw.org.

Lutheran Foundation
of the Southwest





Service of Thanksgiving and Praise harvest altar. Everyone enjoyed the bounty.



Pastor's Fall Feast Get Together. A great time was enjoyed by all!



Thank you to Susie Chow and Airi Noodle for

Lettuce be thankful for the bountiful food we receive from the Houston Food Bank

October & November Memorials & Honorariums

In MEMORY of:

Robert Barth
Larry Linsenbardt

Given By:

Hoya & Angie Ash
Sandra Sensebe

Designation:

General Fund
Choir Fund

| FROM THE TREASURER | | | | |
|---|--------------|-------------|---------------------------------|--------------|
| <i>Needed weekly, \$4815 to cover General Fund expenses</i> | | | October Monthly Activity | |
| General Fund Income YTD | 211,240.62 | 20,717.00 | | 231,957.62 |
| General Fund Expenses YTD | (176,389.35) | (18,803.52) | | (195,192.87) |
| | \$34,851.27 | \$1,913.48 | | \$36,764.75 |

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, BAYTOWN, TX
Council Meeting November 9, 2023

Members Present: Pastor Nancy, John Schlobohm, Kim Holle, Angie Ash, Clarke Crizer, Rosie Haas, Susan Clanton, Bev Tomsic, Luis Estrada, Becky Linsenbardt **Members Absent:** Ian Gillespie, Kurt Migl, Donna Reavis

In the absence of President Ian Gillespie, the meeting was called to order by Vice President John Schlobohm at 6:33 PM. Pastor Nancy led the group in the opening prayer.

OCTOBER COUNCIL MINUTES

Susan Clanton MOVED, Beverly Tomsic seconded, to approve the Minutes of the October 12, 2023, Council meeting. Motion carried.

PASTOR'S REPORT

- Officiated at the memorial service for Robert Barth on October 28 in Navasota, TX.
- Conducted house blessing for Birdie and Luis Estrada on October 15.
- Attended Minister Appreciation Presentation and Breakfast Baytown Methodist Hospital.
- First Sunday Confirmation continues.
- Assembly of God contract October 23, 2023 – April 23, 2024.
- Tuesdays – 7-8 PM; Thursdays, 7-9 PM; Sundays, 2-5 PM
- Church office closed Wed., Nov. 22 – Thursday, Nov. 23 (Thanksgiving)
- Pastor Nancy on vacation Wed., Nov. 22 – Monday, Nov. 27. Fill in pastor for Nov. 26- Rev. Karen Redpath
- Delivered Lutheran World Relief Care Kits with Bonnie Kilburn to Kinsmen Lutheran on October 30.

TREASURER'S REPORT

- Kim Holle presented the financials for the month of October, reporting that income exceeded expenses in the amount of \$1,913.48.
- Rosie Haas MOVED, Susan Clanton seconded to approve the report as presented. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

- Security System – Jada has sent a letter to ADT terminating their services (alarm monitoring and cameras leasing). Alarm monitoring expires 2/27/24. Camera leasing expires 12/06/23.

NEW BUSINESS

- Assembly of God will sign the new contract. It was decided not to allow the additional hours they requested due to timing with St. Paul's services and activities.
- Kim Holle MOVED, Susan Clanton seconded to change the time of St. Paul's Christmas Eve service to 6:00 PM due to a conflict with Assembly of God services. Motion carried.
- **Nominating Committee** John Schlobohm, Susan Clanton, and Debbie Gillespie will be the Nominating Committee for the 2024 Annual Congregational Meeting. Kurt Migl and Clarke Crizer will not return as council members.

Committee Reports**Property**

- There is a possible problem with the water line in the kitchen. Choice Plumbing will perform a scope diagnosis to determine any problems.

Inreach/Outreach

- St. Paul's will participate in ELCA Good Gifts, replacing gifts for the community. Donated funds will be designated for goats and chickens.
- Breakfast with Santa will be held Saturday, December 2. Ben Vircant will be Santa.
- Golden Group bus trip will be Tues., November 15 to Tanger Outlet Mall followed by lunch at Tookie's Seafood.
- Turkeys will be ordered from Walmart for Thanksgiving Food Pantry distribution.

Youth and Family

- Fall Feast Get Together – Saturday, November 18 from 11:00 – 3:00 at Pastor Nancy's home. Bring a pot luck dish, a lawn chair and a \$10 White Elephant gift (optional).
- The German Dinner cleared \$3,760.

Worship and Music

- The organ company visited St. Paul's and inspected the organ. It was found that the organ is primarily in good condition, but needs fine tuning. A sub-woofer is missing, and after-market parts need to be removed. Any repairs will be paid through the Worship and Music budget.
- Mid-week Advent services will be December 6, 13, and 20.
- Congregation will be asked to submit their favorite hymns to be sung at the New Year's Eve service.

Constitution Revisions

Council approved updates to St. Paul's constitution On May 11, 2023. Updates were presented to ELCA TX-LA Gulf Coast Synod Secretary for his review. As advised by the Secretary, minor updates were made so that they are aligned with the ELCA model constitution.

Changes were made to.....

- C12.05c....The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to \$25,000 for unfunded items not included in the budget. (To act in an emergency without a Congregation Meeting.)
- B.5.3.3 Same wording as above.
- B.5.2.4 Agree to wording ...The Treasurer cannot also serve as the financial secretary simultaneously.

Kim Holle MOVED, Clarke Crizer seconded to approve the Constitution Bylaws and changes above. Motion carried.

The Green Book was reviewed.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 PM and closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Angie Ash, Secretary

2024 Offering Envelopes are in the Narthex ready for you to take home.

2024 Nominating Committee
John Schlobohm, Susan Clanton
Debbie Gillespie

St. Paul's Lutheran Church ELCA
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stpaulssecretary@comcast.net
www.stpaulsbaytown.org



Give Now



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

This is Christ's church.

There is a place for you here.

We are the church that shares a living, daring confidence in God's grace. Liberated by our faith, we embrace you as a whole person—questions, complexities and all. Join us as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.



Thank you Veterans!

Ben Vircant, Don Eschberger, James McGee, Erwin Hendricks, James Herrington