FIRST ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH DECEMBER/JANUARY NEWSLETTER

# FIRST CONNECTIONS



### A Note From Pastor Joel

This year, once again we are returning to four separate worship services on Christmas Eve. The previous two years we only held three; one at 4:00, one at 4:30, and one at 11:00 p.m. But, that was because Christmas Eve fell on a weekend, once on a Saturday and once on a Sunday. However, we realize that there are people who have to work on Christmas Eve day and making the 4:00 or 4:30 services may not be a possibility. And we know that 11:00 can be late, especially if you have children. Therefore, we will hold a 7:00 service once again.

As in years past, both 4:00 and 4:30 will feature our children's choirs. Our 11:00 service will be a traditional service in the Sanctuary with communion.

It is our hope and prayer that you will be able to join us to worship and remember how God, in his great mercy and love sent Jesus to be our Lord and Savior as a child in a manger. Let's keep this holiday as a Holy Day!

# "United, We Live God's Will"



# Congratulations Pastor Ann Auten!

Ann was ordained on November 24th.

She has
accepted a parttime Interim
Pastor call at St.
John Lutheran
Church in
Athol, Kansas.



**WORSHIP**\*OPPORTUNITIES

ADULT MINISTRY
\*LEARNING
OPPORTUNITIES

KIDS MINISTRY
\*WINTER PROGRAMS

YOUTH MINISTRY
\*WINTER PROGRAMS

MISSION
\*OUTREACH
OPPORTUNITIES



# WORSHIP

Questions? **Contact: The Church Office** (402) 463-1329



Communion 1st Weekend of the Month

\* Saturdays - 6:00 PM Sundays - 8:25 AM

Celebration Center

Communion 3rd Sunday of the Month Sundays - 10:35 AM

8:25 AM & 10:35 AM

# Village CH. 3

Sundays 6:00 PM Wednesdays 12:30 PM

December 8th



## Christmas Service of Music 8:25 a.m. Worship Service

 Special service featuring our Bell Choir and Adult Choir as they perform some of our favorite Christmas songs! 🎶

Want to sing in the choir? practice is on Dec. 5th at 7:00 p.m.

December 15th THE PROMISE OF CHRISTMAS



### Children's Advent Service 10:35 a.m. Worship Service

Join us for the Children's Advent Service where the kids will lead the worship by performing the musical "The Promise of Christmas." God always keeps His promises! Explore with us God's promises throughout the Bible with incredible songs ranging from traditional carols to modern worship songs, and even a scripture memory song! Help us celebrate like the angels and worship the King who always keeps His promises!

December 22nd



# Blue Christmas Worship Service 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Join us for our Blue Christmas worship service-a special time to find comfort and peace during the holiday season. This reflective gathering offers space for those facing grief, loss, or challenges to come together, seek hope, and experience God's love. All are welcome.

December 24th



# Christmas Eve Services

Join us for a joyful Christmas Eve worship service as we celebrate the birth of Christ! Experience the

4:00 pm ~ Traditional in Sanctuary 4:30 pm ~ Contemporary in Celebration Center

7:00 pm ~ Service in Sanctuary beauty of the season through carols, 11:00 pm ~ Traditional in Sanctuary Scripture, and a message of hope.

January 12th



# March of Faith





A Service of Healing and Hope

# December 22nd ~ 7:00 p.m. ~ Sanctuary

The holiday season is always challenging for those whose hearts are hurting. This Blue Christmas worship service offers a special space to acknowledge. those feelings of grief, loss, or difficulty. Together we will seek God's presence as we experience the reality that even in our loneliness, we are not alone.

			Decer	nber 2	2024			
	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
	1 8:25 Worship 9:30 Education Hour 10:35 Worship	2 6:30 Bell Choir 7:00 Property	1:00 Christmas Bags 4:30 Outreach	5:00 Advent Project 6:00 Activities Begin 7:00 Praise Band 7:30 College Bible Study	5 1:00 Quilting 3:00 College View Visit 4:00 Kensington Visit 7:00 Bibles & Brews	6	7 9:30 GriefShare: Surviving the Holidays 6:00 Worship	40
*	8 8:25 Service of Music Worship 9:30 Education Hour 10:35 Worship 5:00 Sr. High Mission Team Meeting	9 12:00 Finance 6:30 Bell Choir	10 6:30 Men's Bible Study 1:00 Quilting 6:30 Foundation 7:30 Council	6:00 Activities Begin 7:00 Praise Band 7:30 College Bible Study 8:00 Soul Café	1:00 Quilting 1:00 Lesson Leaders 2:00 Knit, Pray, Crochet 4:00 Homestead 7:00 Bibles & Brews	13	<ul> <li>Sr. High Mission Team Bake Sale Fundraiser</li> <li>6:00 Worship</li> </ul>	今次レ
10) (0)	15 Sr. High Mission Team Bake Sale Fundraiser 8:25 Worship 9:30 Education Hour 10:35 Children's Advent Worship Service	16 6:30 Bell Choir	17 6:30 Men's Bible Study 1:00 Quilting 1:30 LCW Group 3 5:00 Stephen Ministry	18 Jr. High Mission Trip Payment Due 9:30 LCW Group 1 1:30 LCW Group 2 5:00 Ichthus Meal 6:00 Activities Begin 7:00 Praise Band 7:30 College Bible Study 8:00 Soul Café	19 1:00 Quilting 7:00 Bibles & Brews	20	21 6:00 Worship	
- XIBI	8:25 Worship 9:30 Education Hour 10:35 Worship 7:00 Blue Christmas	23 6:30 Bell Choir	24 6:30 Men's Bible Study 12:00 Office Closed 4:00 Worship 4:30 Worship 7:00 Worship 11:00 Worship	Office Closed No Ichthus Activities	26 1:00 Quilting 2:00 Knit, Pray, Crochet	27	28 6:00 Worship	
	8:25 Worship 9:30 Education Hour 10:35 Worship	30 6:30 Bell Choir	31 6:30 Men's Bible Study 1:00 Quilting		N			大学





**Questions? Contact: Pastor Chad Power** (402) 705-4026





- 6TH GRADES

WEDNESDAY NIGHT ICHTHUS 6:00 - 7:30 P.M. SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:30 - 10:30 A.M.



# December

A series on the Joy of Christmas

This series focuses on the theme of Christmas and the greatest low coming from the gift of Jesus. It offers leaders and students a chance to connect by sharing stories about their own experiences of joy through Jesus.



January A series on Jesus' Early Life

The theme of Camp Believe It is camping because we're talking about how to live out our faith in the "wild!"

Each GROW lesson begins on Wednesday nights and the continues on Sunday morning with activities, Bible stories, music, and games. If your child has turned three, they can start at any time.

# Children's Advent Service Sunday, December 15th 10:35 a.m.

THE PROMISE OF CHRISTMAS



A special service led by the children as they share the story of Christmas! They bring the story to life and remind us of the true meaning of the season. Practices are held on Wednesday nights and Sunday mornings during regularly scheduled activities.

# Cherubs & Joyful Noises Choir Schedule December 15th-Advent Service at 10:35 a.m. Contemporary Service

December 24th-Christmas Eve at 4:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. Worship Services

February 9th at 10:35 a.m. Contemporary Service March 19th-at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday Lenten Service April 13th at 10:35 a.m. Contemporary Service

May 11th - Mother's Day at 10:35 a.m. Contemporary Service





**THURSDAY** 8:15-11:00 AM \$80/month

MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, &

**FRIDAY** 8:15-11:00 AM \$100/month

TO REGISTER OR FOR MORE INFORMATION: (402) 463-1329 OR FIRSTSTPAULS.ORG







**Advent Project** 

# Wednesday, December 4th Gathering Area ~ Starting at 5:00 p.m.

Drop in as you are available or pick up a kit and make it at home!

Join us for a special church-wide Advent project! Create your own nativity scene and then follow along with our provided devotional as we trace the journey of Mary and Joseph to the birth of Jesus.

Please register in advance so that we have enough materials for everyone!

Ways to register: ~ Scan the QR code ~Sign the Sheet in Gathering Area ~Call the Church Office ~Click on the link on our website



**Questions? Contact: Pastor Chad Power** (402) 705-4026

# YOUTH **Discipleship**

# 6th Graders

Wednesdays: The LOT 6:00 - 7:30 pm

Sundays: Donuts & Devos 9:30 - 10:30 am

# Junior High Ministry

7th Grade Confirmation Meet in Parsonage

8th Grade Confirmation Meet in Basement at Y&FMC

Wednesdays 6:05-7:30 p.m.

Sr. High 2025 Mission Trip Holiday Bake Sale Fundraiser DECEMBER 14-15

Before and After each Service 2. EE 19 30 3E



## OREO's- The Good Stuff in the Middle

For ALL 7th & 8th Graders & Friends



Meets on the 4th Sunday of the month at 6:30 p.m. in the Gathering Area

December 22nd \*No Oreo's

January 26th It's a surprise!

# 2025 Jr. High Mission Trip Info!

2nd Payment Due: Wed. December 18th

Next Fundraiser: Sunday, January 26th

FSP Annual Meeting Soup Luncheon Where: Celebration Center

\*This mission trip is for current 7th & 8th graders.



2025 SR. HIGH MISSION TRIP INFO!

NEXT MEETING: DECEMBER 8TH @ 5:00 PM

2ND PAYMENT DUE WEDNESDAY JANUARY 15TH

NEXT FUNDRAISER: HOLIDAY BAKE SALE SATURDAY, DEC. 14TH & SUNDAY, DEC. 15TH

# Senior High Ministry

Soul Café is for Grades 9-12 & friends. Meet in the Christian Underground. 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. 8:00 - 9:00 p.m. Jesus Hour Soul Café

Senior High Ministry will focus on the journey to the nativity. Together, they will explore the events leading to Christ's birth and reflect on the meaning for our lives today. Come for meaningful discussions,

snacks, fellowship, and a deeper understanding of the Christmas story. Don't miss this special journey!



for adults!



College Agers Bible Study Wednesdays @ 7:30 PM Parsonage

A Bible study designed just for college-aged young adults. Come meet new friends and dive into the Word of God in a relaxed and welcoming environment.

# MISSION



## HISTORY OF THE ADVENT WREATH

The first advent wreath was created in the early 1800s by Lutheran Pastor Johann Hinrich Wichern. During December, the children in his mission school would ask daily if Christmas had arrived. In response to their impatience and constant questioning, he designed a "wreath" from the wheel of a cart, featuring 20 red candles and 4 white ones. To help the children mark time in the buildup to Christmas, a new red candle was lit each weekday, increasing the number lit as each day passed. White candles were reserved for Sundays.

Although the advent wreath that is commonly used today was developed more recently, it follows the same basic idea. The wreath is made out of evergreens in the shape of a circle to represent eternal life. The Advent candles represent the fragile light of hope amidst the deep dark of the season. As Christ's Advent, or "coming" draws nearer, a new candle is lit each week, combining with the light of the candle from the passing week.

#### WEEK ONE

The first candle, which is purple, symbolizes hope. It is referred to as the Prophecy
Candle in remembrance of the prophets, especially Isaiah, who foretold the
birth of Christ. It represents the expectation felt in anticipation of the coming Messiah.

#### **WEEK TWO**

The second candle, also purple, represents faith. It is also called the Bethlehem Candle as it reminds us of Mary and Joseph's journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem before Mary gave birth to Jesus.

#### WEEK THREE

The third candle is pink and symbolizes joy. It is called the Shepherd's Candle, and is pink because rose is a liturgical color for joy. The third Sunday of Advent is Gaudete (the Latin word for Rejoice) Sunday and is meant to remind us of the joy that the world experienced at the birth of Jesus, as well as the joy we feel to reach the midpoint of Advent.

#### **WEEK FOUR**

On week four, we light the last purple candle to mark the final week of prayer and penance as we wait for the birth of our Savior. This candle, the Angel's Candle, symbolizes peace. It reminds us of the message of the angels: "Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men."

#### **CHRISTMAS EVE**

The fifth candle which is white, placed in the "center of creation," represents light and purity and is called Christ's Candle. It is lit on Christmas Eve.

## December

Dec. 18th - Christmas

Dec. 11th - Tater
Tot Casserole,
Rolls, Dessert

Dec. 18th - Christmas

Dinner: Pork Loin, Cheesy
Potatoes, Green Beans,
Cole Slaw, Christmas
Dessert

Dec. 20th - NO ICHTHUS MEAL OR ACTIVITIES

January

## Jan. 1st - NO ICHTHUS MEAL OR ACTIVITIES

REMANING JANUARY MENU TBD

ALL MEALS SERVED WITH SALAD, VEGGIES AND PEANUT BUTTER & JELLY SANDWICHES

\*All Meals are Subject to Change\*

# New Stephen Ministers

JOIN US ON JANUARY 5TH AS WE COMMISSION OUR NEWEST STEPHEN MINISTERS:

VAL ERICKSON
JEAN JANSSEN
SUSAN LUEDDERS
SANDI STEVENS

OUR STEPHEN MINISTRY PROGRAM IS HERE TO PROVIDE COMPASSIONATE, ONE-ON-ONE CARE FOR THOSE GOING THROUGH A CHALLENGING TIME. IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW COULD BENEFIT FROM THIS CONFIDENTIAL SUPPORT, WE WOULD LOVE TO HELP. PLEASE REACH OUT TO ANN AUTEN, KATHY ADELSON, OR LYNN HOHLEN.

### Christmas Gift Bags

will be ready by December 4th! They can be found in the Friendship Gathering Area. Help us spread the joy of the holiday season by delivering one (or more) of the bags. We're delivering special care bags to members of our church family who may have difficulty getting out, have experienced a loss, or are in their golden years. It's a small way to remind them they're loved and cherished.

There are extra gift bags if you know someone that needs a little
Christmas cheer.

# Special Offering Habitat for Humanity

Christmas Eve All Gervices

# 2024

# YEAR-END GIVING

Do you have a gift you want to be credited to the 2024 calendar year for tax purposes?

All gifts must be received in the office by 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 31st or placed in the offering plate no later than the December 28th and 29th services.

# General Fund Finance Report

(AMOUNTS ARE AS OF OCTOBER 31, 2024)

Total 2024 Income: Total 2024 Expenses: Current Deficit: \$514,296.50 \$620,078.98 -\$105,782.48



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Dec. 4th - BBQ

Pork Sandwiches,

Baked Beans, Coleslaw, Dessert

Cheesy Potatoes,

# ADULT

**Discipleship** 

Questions? Contact: Pastor Chad Power (402) 705-4026

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDIES START JANUARY 8TH

### WINNING THE WAR IN YOUR MIND

by Craig Groeschel Hosted by Jennifer Karl

Wednesdays from 6:05-7:25 pm

Location: Ephesians Room

Groeschel provides four gaming-changing tools for mastering your thoughts and discovering God's best for your life. He reveals strategies to help you understand how the mind works and replace the lies of the enemy with God's truth.

TUESDAY MORNING

MEN'S BIBLE STUDÝ

This men's Bible study dives deeper into Scripture and explores the Word of God. Through meaningful discussion and

reflection, come grow in your faith and understanding. Start your day with coffee, donuts, conversation, and the Word of God!

Hosted by

Dale Janssen

and Jon Martin

Tuesdays at 6:30 a.m.

Location: Heritage Room



### FINDING STRENGTH IN WEAKNESS

by Paul Stevens

Hosted by Nancy Krueger and Travis Bronson

> Wednesdays from 6:05-7:25 pm

Location: Heritage Room

The apostle Paul delighted in his weaknesses, welcomed hardship as a friend and thanked God for obstacles that offered opportunities to experience God's power. Was he crazy Paul teaches you to rely, as he did, on God's great promise: "My grace is sufficient for you."



by Kyle Idleman Hosted by Evan Volzke Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.

ONE AT A TIME

With conviction and humor, Kyle Idleman challenges true disciples to fully commit to the unexpected, Jesus way of challenging the world: by

loving people one at a time.

He helps us understand Jesus's surprising habits, unlock the power of small things done with great love, and discover how God wants to use us to change the world one person at a time.



Join us on Wednesday Nights!

5:00-6:15 pm: Community Meals 6:00-7:30 pm: PreK-6th Grade Programs

6:05-7:30 pm: Confirmation and Adult Programs

We've purchased unlimited access to thousands of Christian videos and are giving free access to everyone in our church.



#### Get Free Access

1. Fmail chad@firststpauls.org to recieve an invite to RightNow Media

2. Or scan the QR code here





We are bringing back our church-wide Advent project. Find all of the details on the kids page!

## Sunday Adult Bible Studies

**CHRISTMAS** 

WINNING

MIND

WAR

YOUR

HOLY GROUNDS PARENT FORUM SUNDAYS AT 9:35 A.M.

**FOLLOW THE JOURNEY TO** THE BIRTH OF JESUS AS WE PREPARE FOR CHRISTMASI

Nursery Provided

on Sundays during the 9:30 am

Education

Hour!

**Adult Forum** Bible Topics with

Pastor Joel Sundays at 9:35 a.m. in the Heritage Room

CONGREGATIONAL ANNUAL MEETING JANUARY 26TH AT 12:00 P.M. IN CC SOUP LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED BY JR HIGH

MISSION TEAM

FREE WILL DONATION!



poinsettias! Order a poinsettia in honor or memory of someone you love to add a personal and meaningful touch to our holiday worship services. Place your order by December 18th. Thank you for helping us make the season special!

Deadline: Dec 18th

Cost: \$10 each

Order yours today by filling out insert in bulletin, scanning the QR code, or calling the church office.







**GATHER25** 

HASTINGS CITY AUDITORIUM FEBRUARY 28TH | 7PM - 12:00AM MARCH 1ST I 8AM - 7PM

Bringing Hastings, Nebraska together to lift high the name of Jesus as the Global Church gathers like never before! Every continent. Every denomination. Together across 25 hours.



LIKE & FOLLOW GATHER 25 HASTINGS ON FACEBOOK



# MEMBER CELEBRATIONS

# <u>Happy Birthday to our Members</u>

### **December Birthdays**

- 1 Dave Gartner 81
- 4 Allen Hoyt 89
- 4 James Kárloff 88
- 7 Sharon Schumm 83
- 8 Joyce Grothen -83
- 8 Richard Hartman 89
- 9 Klara McLeod 93
- 11 Marilyn Schneider 85
- 12 Evelyn Sweet 90
- 13 Gwendolyn Hoylman 86
- 13 Janice Baird 84
- 13 Albert Schultz 82
- 16 Ray Snell 80
- 20 Sheila Zalman 90
- 26 Norman Nackerud 96
- 27 Sandy Van Lengen 80 27 Florence Woodward 86
- 29 Sharon Lambrecht 80
- 31 Eilene Saylor 86

### **January Birthdays**

- 2 Leslie Harms 91
- 7 Nelda Fleharty 81 23 LeRoy Harder 91
- 2 Karen Tegler 83

# Happy Anniversary to our Members \* milestone anniversary - 25th and 50th

### **December Anniversaries**

- \* 7 Dean and Micki Buscher 1974
- 13 Raymond and Sharon Scholl 1963
- 16 Gerald and Sandra Mackie Jr. 1967 17 Wade and Jennifer Fleischer 1994

- 18 Marvin and Marjorie Colburn 1971 19 Matt and Jody Kuhr 1998 22 Donald and Dianne Conyers 1972
- 22 David and Shawn Schultz 1995
- 23 Henry and Marva Potts 1966
- 26 Donald and Patricia Olsen 1964
- 26 Richard and Sharon Brehm 1964
- 27 Steven and Kathryn Adelson 1980
- 28 Joe and Carol Thompson 1971
- 28 Myron and Wendi Schaefer -1996 30 William and Diane McLeod 1983
- 30 Kevin and Kim Koepke 1995

31 - Scott and Theresa Bokelman - 1983

## January Anniversaries

6 - Gregory and Virginia Tjarks - 1979 \* 25 - Thomas and Patty Meyer - 1975 27 - Kevin and Carissa Uhrmacher - 1996

# Journal of Life and Growth

September 1st-October 31st

### **Baptisms**

Amelia McWhirter on 9/1/2024 Liam Klein on 9/8/2024 Breck Samuelson on 9/22/2024

Cassidy Bramble on 10/6/2024 Atley Bramble on 10/6/2024 Claire Brei on 10/27/2024

### Marriages

Jess Andreasen and Britta Douglas on 9/21/2024 Jordan Nash and Maxine Lickteig on 10/5/2024

## Transferred to Church Triumphant

Bob Lubken on 10/1/2024 Florence Martin on 10/10/2024 Thomas Kunkel on 10/15/2024 **Terry Burnham on 10/26/2024** 

**Terry Ground on 10/31/2024**