



St. Paul News

The Newsletter of
St. Paul Lutheran Church
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What is the lectionary?

By Pastor Neil Wehmas

"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching." (2 Timothy 3:16-4:2)

"So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone..." (Ephesians 2:19-20)

These passages and other scriptures makes it clear that the foundation of any Christian church is to be Jesus Christ and the Holy Scriptures which confess him. Therefore, every worship service is grounded in scripture and regularly includes the reading the scriptures.

The challenge throughout the history of Christianity has been, what should one read. In the early church, when literacy was stronger, they continued the Jewish practice of *lectio continua*. In other words, they just read as much of the Bible as they had time to read on a given Sunday, and then the following week they would pick up where they left off.

By the middle of the 4th century, most of the church calendar as we know it had been put into widespread practice. Also, due to various invasions, illiteracy had increased. This gave rise to the first versions of the lectionary. That is a weekly reading from the Epistles (Romans through Jude) and a reading from the Gospels. The inclusion of the Old Testament reading varied throughout the years.

Beginning with the weekend of December 3rd, here at St. Paul Lutheran Church, we will return to the practice of following the 1-Year or Historic Lectionary. This was the primary lectionary in usage throughout the Christian Church from middle of the 5th Century until the 1970's.

Since the 1970's approximately two-thirds of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod followed the 3-year lectionary. That is a cycle of scripture readings that cycles itself every three years. During the 2022-23 church year, we were in Year A, therefore there was a strong focus upon the Gospel of Matthew. Year B follows the Gospel of Mark, while the Gospel of Luke is dedicated to Year C. The Gospel of John is kind of scattered throughout the three years.

The Old Testament attempts to reflect the Gospel lesson, while the Epistle lesson tends to follow the *lectio continua* practice of reading through a single book of the New Testament. The strength of this lectionary is that you read through more of the Bible within the context of worship.

The Historic Lectionary may not read through as much of the scriptures, but due to repeating the same text on the same Sunday year-after-year, it is more effective for retention of the scriptures. In other words, you may read less scripture, but familiarity with those particular scriptures are strengthened.

Due to the fact that Historic Lectionary has been practiced for almost 1500 years with minimal variation, there was more time to develop the themes for each Sunday. One will notice through the year, the tightly woven themes. The Epistle, the gospel, and the Old Testament reading are all connected. The prayer of the day (Collect), the gradual, alleluia verse, and even the hymn of the day are written and designed specifically for that day of the church year. This all works to further emphasize the themes of the day.

Take for example, the first Sunday in Advent:

- The Prayer of the Day: “Stir up Your power, O Lord, and **come...**”
- Jeremiah 23:5-8 (The Old Testament Lesson): “Behold, the days are **coming...**”
- The Gradual: “None who wait for you shall be put to shame”
- Romans 13:11-14 (The Epistle Lesson): “Salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed.”
- Matthew 21:1-9 (The Gospel Lesson): “Behold your king is **coming** to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey...”
- HYMN OF THE DAY: “Savior of the Nations, **Come**”

Notice how each of the propers (as they are called) build upon one another. First, we pray that the Lord would come. Then we hear from the prophet that the days are coming. Then we who wait for his coming are told that we will not be put to shame. Paul tells us that salvation is nearer to us. This truth is revealed in Jesus’ coming into Jerusalem, riding on the Colt of a donkey.

For yes, indeed, salvation has come in the person of Jesus born of the virgin, humiliated unto the point of death, even death upon a cross. The hymn we sing for the day echoes home this theme of rejoicing that God kept his first promise of Christ’s coming, so in this season of Advent, we anticipate the second coming of Christ.

As we venture through this Historic Lectionary, be sure to watch out for these connections. Make it a practice to read the prayers, the scriptures, even the hymn of the day, as you ready your heart and mind for worship. I pray that this journey will be of nourishment to your walk in faith. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

CHURCH NEWS

Baptisms: Alex Weir, Colter Groves, Brooklyn Black

Death: Margaret Hoffman

Welcome into membership: Butch and Marilyn Dausel, transfer from St. John’s, Battle Creek

COMMUNITY BASKET NEEDS FOR DECEMBER:



for December: Breakfast items: pancake mix, syrup, cereal, cereal bars, jelly, peanut butter, etc. place your donation in the shopping cart in the Narthex. *All items are appreciated as well, as they can always use donations.* The Community Basket is open on Thursdays (except 3rd Thursday), from 2:30-5:30PM. **The mobile food pantry will be on December 21 in Kiron, at the Shed, 14 N. Grove., from 4:30-5:30PM.**



COFFEE AND FELLOWSHIP Coffee & Fellowship on Sunday mornings at 10:15AM is in the Fellowship Hall. Come and join us! If you would like to help or provide, please let Deb Clausen or Kathy Edsen know.

The High School Youth will provide & serve on the 1st Sunday’s of the month and the Junior High Youth will provide & serve on the 3rd Sunday of the month.

WEDNESDAY EARLY MORNING BIBLE CLASS meets at **7:00AM** at Jimmy's


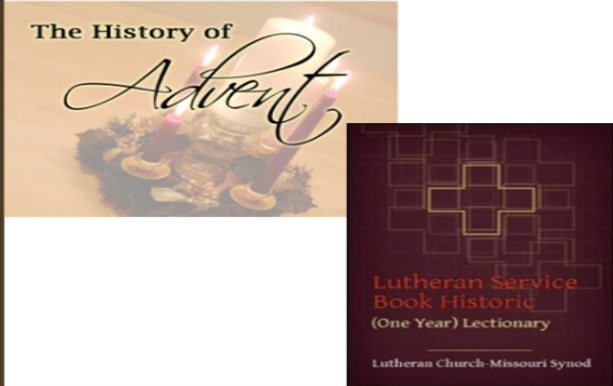
WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS meets from **9:30-10:30AM** in the Conference Room in the lower level.

THURSDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY: MORE THAN BREAD BIBLE STUDY AT SUBWAY will meet at **6:00PM**

SUNDAY MORNING HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH in the youth room from **10:15-11:15AM**

SUNDAY MORNING ADULT BIBLE CLASS join us in the Fellowship Hall **10:30-11:15AM**



Bible Studies w/Pastor Neil	
	
Wednesday's @9:30am	Sunday's @10:30am



Lutheran Youth Fellowship December 2023

Holiday Porch Pots & Centerpieces Sunday, December 3rd @1:00-2:30pm & 2:30-4:00pm

Location: The Depot at Moorehead Park Cost: \$25 for Porch Pots & \$15 for Centerpieces

Fundraiser for the St. Paul Lutheran Church High School Youth Ministry

Fellowship Time—Youth Hosted Sundays

Sunday, December 3rd after Worship—High School Youth Group

Sunday, December 17th after Worship—Middle School Youth Group

Advent Supper Hosted by Middle School Youth Group

Wednesday, December 6th from 5:15-6:45pm

“Who Am I” Higher Things Youth Conference

WHERE: Concordia University, Mequon, Wisconsin (north of Milwaukee)

WHEN: June 25-28, 2024 (with possible additional day)

COST: \$175 Deposit **DEADLINE:** (Mid to Late January, date to be determined)

WHO: Completed 8th-12th Grade (7th Grade with permission)

RUTH (2) will meet on Dec. 7 at Jimmy's at noon and meet at the church for Bible Study at 1:00PM.. Linda will be BSL. We had 9 present for our November meeting. We will not be having an open house of our Nativity display this year, HOWEVER we would encourage you to come and enjoy the nativities, bring your friends or any groups from December 4 – December 22 during the week any time between 9:00am-4:00pm, see the nativities, sparking lights and Christmas music.

EUNICE (10) will meet on Dec. 7 at the Willowdale Assisted Living, Battle Creek at 2:30PM. Joan will be hostess and Karen will be BSL. We had 7 present for our November meeting.



Christmas Cards

NATIVITY DISPLAY The Ladies have decorated with the wonderful selection of Nativity sets this year, and from December 4 – December 22 during the week from 9:00am-4:00pm, we welcome anyone to come and enjoy the nativities and bring your friends or groups welcomed.

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ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH
IDA GROVE ADVENT MEAL
Sponsored by Junior High Youth
Wednesday, December 6th
Serving 5:15 - 6:45PM
Please join us for 7pm Advent Worship!



Smoked BBQ Pulled Pork
Corn Casserole
Mac N Cheese
Roll & Butter
Homemade Desserts
Milk / Juice / Water
**** FREE WILL OFFERING ****

\$10

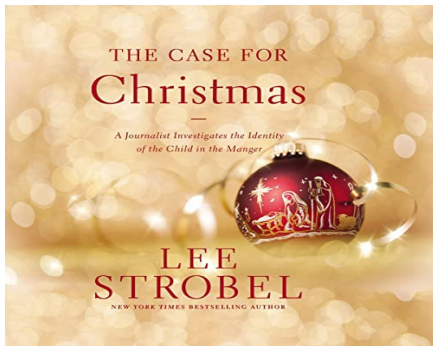
Carry Out Meals Available
Please sign up in Church Narthex
or call Church Office 712-364-2918

The Jr High Youth will be serving here in the church fellowship hall - Davey's Smoked BBQ and sides (see poster below) for a free will offering. Carry Out meals are available if you want them at a certain time please sign up, comment below or call the church. If you haven't had a chance to try our hometown Davey's Smoked BBQ **NOTE: Meals are at the church, and not at Davey's.**

ADVENT SUPPERS

Wednesday, December 13 from 5:15-6:30/6:45PM – Soup

Wednesday, December 20 from 5:15-6:30/6:45PM – Baked Potato Bar



BOOK OF THE MONTH FOR DECEMBER: We have a copy available on the Welcome Center in the Narthex, also available online, Audible, Amazon Who was in the manger that first Christmas morning? Some say he would become a great moral leader. Others, a social critic. Still others view Jesus as a profound philosopher, a rabbi, a feminist, a prophet, and more. Many are convinced he was the divine Son of God. Who was he---really? And how can you know for sure? Consulting experts on the Bible, archaeology, and messianic prophecy, Lee Strobel searches out the true identity of the child in the manger. Strobel asks the tough, pointed questions you'd expect from an award-

winning legal journalist sifting through the Eyewitness Evidence---Can the biographies of Jesus be trusted? Scientific Evidence---What does archaeology reveal? Profile Evidence---Did Jesus fulfill the attributes of God? Fingerprint Evidence---Did Jesus uniquely match the identity of the Messiah? Somewhere beyond the traditions of the Christmas holiday lies the truth. It may be more compelling than you've realized. Weigh the facts . . . and decide for yourself.

Advent meanings

During Advent, which begins this year on December 3, many churches and families use wreaths to symbolize watchfulness and increasing joy as Christmas approaches. Colors for the candles vary, with some traditions using blue (for hope or creation) and others preferring purple (for royalty, humility or penitence).

The four candles that each represent a week in Advent also signify hope, peace, joy and love. (The third candle is often pink.) In the center is the white Christ candle, representing Jesus as the light of the world. That candle is lit on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

The round, green Advent wreath has special meaning of its own. It symbolizes eternal life and the unending love of God, who sent his only Son to earth to die in our place.



Wednesday, December 6th @7:00pm

Hymn sing at 6:45pm

St. Nicholas Day: Who is St. Nicholas of Myra?

Bring an extra pair of shoes to place around the chancel.

Wednesday, December 13th @7:00pm

Hymn sing at 6:45pm

St. Lucy's Day: Who is this Martyr of light?

Wednesday, December 20th @7:00pm

Hymn sing at 6:45pm

Katharina von Bora Luther, a beloved wife



Sunday, December 24th @2pm & 6pm

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

Monday, December 25th @10am

Christmas Day Service w/Communion



Sunday, December 31st @6pm

New Year's Eve Worship w/Communion