



# St. Paul's Monthly Messenger

December, 2025

## Pastor's Notes:

### **Theologians have different opinions but, according to your best estimation, when was Jesus born?**

With Advent and Christmas this month, our minds are focused on the coming of Jesus, especially at his birth in Bethlehem. Christmas is the day that we celebrate Jesus' birth, but is it really His birthday? Also, what year was Jesus born? If "BC" is "before Christ" then was Jesus born in year 1 AD?

First, the question of the day of Jesus' birth is not conclusively given by Scripture, and therefore not an article of faith. It is more important to recognize what Jesus' birth means. Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, is both True God and True Man. What we celebrate on Christmas is not primarily a "birthday party," but the incarnation. In Jesus' birth, we see that the Son of God, second person of the Trinity, took on human flesh and became one of us. He is true man, as we are, and was a true little baby, as we all were.

Some of the great Christmas hymns tell us about this in beautiful language:

*Welcome to earth, O Noble Guest, through whom the sinful world is blest! You came to share my misery, that You might share my joy with me. Ah Lord, though You created all, how weak You are, so poor and small, that You should choose to lay your head, where lowly cattle lately fed! (Hymn 358)*

*Highest, most holy, Light of Light eternal, born of a virgin, a mortal He comes; Son of the Father, now in flesh appearing, O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord! (Hymn 379)*

*Christ by highest heaven adored, Christ the everlasting Lord, late in time, behold Him come, offspring of a virgin's womb. Veiled in flesh the Godhead see, hail the incarnate Deity! Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Jesus our Immanuel! Hark, the herald angels sing, glory to the newborn king! (Hymn 380)*

Having established that the importance of Christmas is the incarnation and not the exact date of Jesus' birth, I will then give my Biblical and historical argument of the traditional date of Christmas as a reliable, as well as Christ's birth being around 1 BC.

First, for the year of Christ's birth: We know from Luke 2:1-2 that Jesus was born during the reign of Caesar Augustus, when he sent out the decree for a census when Quirinius was governor of Syria. Luke 3:1 states that Jesus was baptized in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, and Luke 3:23 states that Jesus began his ministry at about 30 years of age. Since, according to history, Tiberius began his reign in AD 14, we can add 15 (Luke 3:1) and then count back 30 years (Luke 3:23) to a date of about 1 BC for Christ's birth, which would have been during the reign of Augustus (Luke 2:1-2).

As for the time of year, we know that Zecharias served as a priest in the division of Abijah (Luke 1:5). These divisions of priests served in a rotation throughout the year. Abijah is the eighth priestly division of 24 (1 Chronicles 24:10). It is reasonable to assume (but not 100% certain) he would be serving roughly August/September, based on the time of Passover as the beginning of the calendar (Exodus 12:1). Since the angel came to Zecharias when he was serving to announce John the Baptist's conception, we can assume that John was conceived by Zecharias and Elizabeth at that time. How does this connect to Jesus? We know Elizabeth was in her 6th month when the Son of God took on flesh in Mary's womb and Jesus was conceived (Luke 1:36), so Mary would have conceived February/March (traditionally March 25), which would have put Jesus' birth around November/December.

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Given the evidence, the traditional year and church year dates are perfectly reasonable. You may find reason to disagree. The important thing is that we trust the scriptures that Jesus was “made man, born of the virgin Mary.” This means the Child born in Bethlehem is also the Redeemer who stands in our place and, as true man, is able to be our substitute on the cross, while as true God, is able to pay for the sins of the whole world. So we can truly sing “Glory to God in the Highest! Peace on earth, and goodwill toward men!”

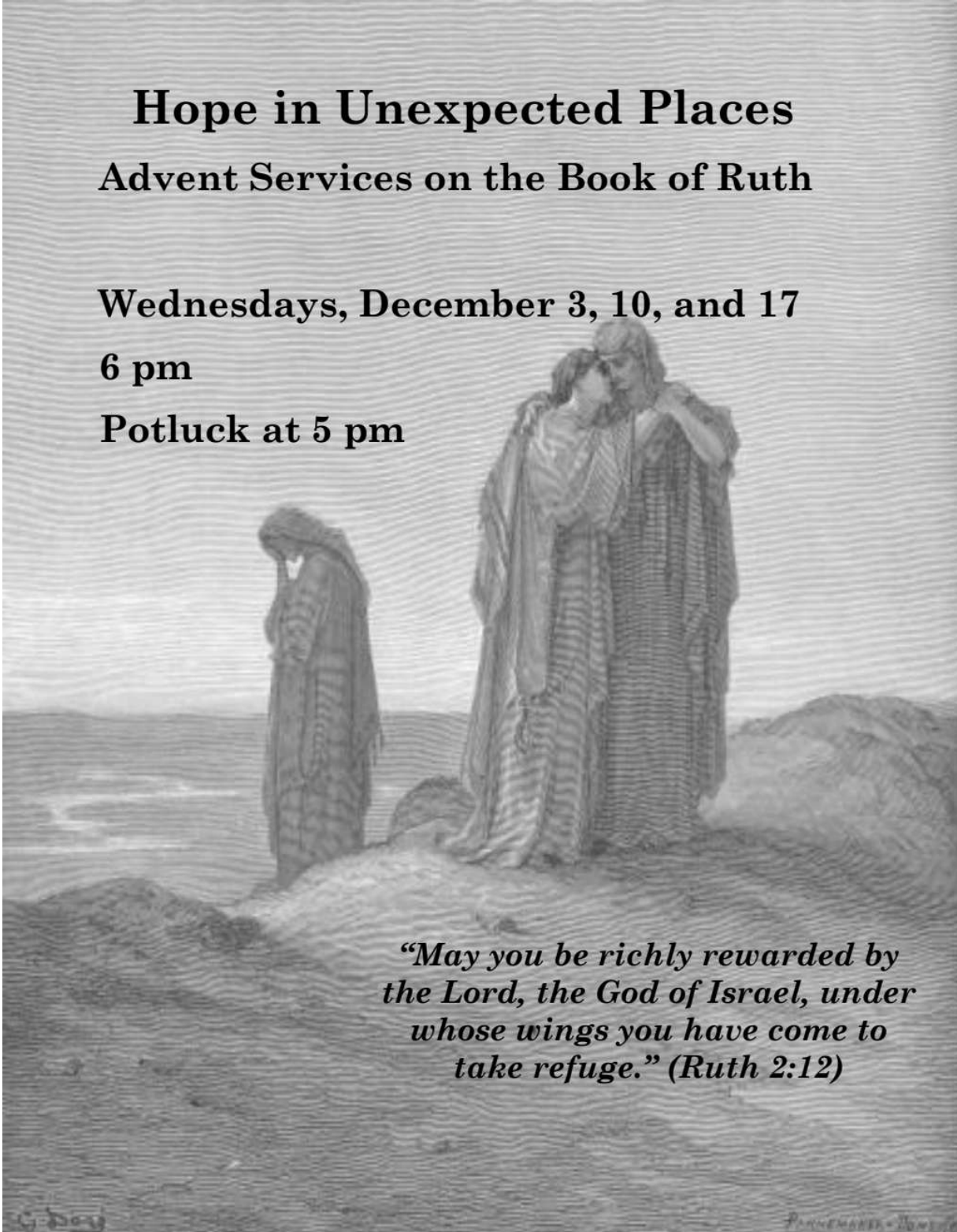
## **Hope in Unexpected Places**

### **Advent Services on the Book of Ruth**

**Wednesdays, December 3, 10, and 17**

**6 pm**

**Potluck at 5 pm**



***“May you be richly rewarded by  
the Lord, the God of Israel, under  
whose wings you have come to  
take refuge.” (Ruth 2:12)***



# **A Service of Lessons and Carols**

**For the churches of Circuit S17**

**6 pm**

**Thursday, December 18, AD 2025**

**Hosted by:**

**St. Paul's Lutheran Church**

**1500 S Briggs St.**

**Lockport, Illinois 60441**

**Join us for a fellowship reception after  
the service**

**For more information call 815-838-1832**

## **Long Range Planning Committee Minutes 11-22-25**

In attendance: Rich Czimer, Vern Lemke, Allan Luzbetak, Teresa Martin, Carl Michaelson, Joel Pilz, Bill Rohder, Karen Rohder, Harold Sagar, and Linda Sanfilippo

### **Permanent Church Sign on Briggs & Division**

Removing the trees has opened up the corner nicely. Sign is very visible, easy to read, and looks great. The brick was acid washed last week and we are still waiting for the cap. Considering to mount the words from old St. Paul's sign on the wall near the west entrance of the church.

### **Photo Directory**

Allan hopes to get started by the end of the year and continue into January. Allen will coordinate with Pastor and the church office about times and a sign-up sheet. Allen will make sure lighting in hallway is sufficient or will change out bulbs. Allen will need help with setup.

### **Checklist/Process Documentation**

Slowly being developed by each group and with a goal to include pictures. Creating a Member Expertise List would also be helpful with church maintenance.

### **Fundraisers/Outreach**

Spaghetti Dinner, Nov. 2, 2025 12pm-5pm:

Was a bigger success than expected. Other comments/concerns: it was an enjoyable day, was the length too long, time of year was good, raffle enjoyed by many, and should we change or not have split the pot. If we decide to do this again, a bigger planning committee and more advertising would be important. About \$4,200.00 was raised. Hope to have the break down of ticket sales, raffles, and bake sale by next long range planning meeting.

Car Show Coffee Booth, Dellwood Park:

August 16, 2026. Joel acquired permission for St. Paul's to have a booth at no cost. Mobile coffee carts are permissible. Plan to use a local coffee company to donate coffee and supplies again. Will offer coffee for free will donation instead of set price.

Allan will check into the details about the church sponsoring a booth at Canal Days. He is also checking into Culver's Kickback Day fundraiser. It was discussed Pop's and White Fence Farm have similar fundraising programs.

Karen provided preliminary details about hosting a blood drive. It was suggested Pastor evaluate if this could be a circuit activity since we are concerned that St. Paul's could not get a sufficient number of people to donate.

### **Sons of Solomon**

Will meet at George's restaurant on Saturday, January 24 at 8:00am. Announcements will be in the newsletter and bulletin.

### **.Community Garden**

Have received no updates from the Village of Lockport. However, Lockport included a survey about the garden in residence water bills.

### **Church/Parsonage Repairs**

Creating a list of church and parsonage repairs should be generated to help budget expenses.

**Next Meeting: Saturday, January 17th at 9am. We have coffee and treats. All are welcome!**



## NEWS AND NOTES

**Lunch with Pastor:** The next Lunch with Pastor will be held on Tuesday, December 9 at 11 am at George's Restaurant in Lockport.



**Manna:** Order forms are available on Sunday, November 30, orders with payment are due on December 7 and orders can be picked up on December 14.

**December Mission Offering:** Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne

**Circuit S17 Lessons and Carols** - The congregations of our circuit will be joining once again at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Lockport (1500 S Briggs St) on Thursday, December 18, at 6 pm, to celebrate Advent and Christmas with a lessons and carols service! We will hear God's Word concerning the coming and birth of Christ, have lots of congregational singing, and, after the service, enjoy a light festive reception. All are welcome, there is no cost.



# Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser

Thanks to all who volunteered, donated, and supported our spaghetti dinner fundraiser at the American Legion. We raised \$4200 for church improvement needs and had a good time reaching out to the community.





Michael Murdaugh	December 1
Hunter Rahn	December 2
Rebecca Chaney	December 6
Phyllis Wilsey	December 9
Timothy Fox	December 21
Andy Saxon	December 22
Henry Antonetti	December 25
Allison Saxon	December 26
Ashley (Richmond) Bee	December 27
Deangelo Jimenez	December 28

## *Happy Baptismal Birthday*

Allison Polinski	December 1
Sandy Michaelsen	December 3
Alexander Rohder	December 4
Christina Saxon	December 4
Abigail Miller	December 5
Inderjit Sundal	December 5
Marcella Richmond	December 10
Michael Smulterowicz	December 11
Tracey Bachmann	December 16
Karen Rohder	December 26



December 1, 2006	Brian & Rachel Popadowski
December 15, 2024	Daniel & Jade Rohder
December 28, 1991	Robert & Marcella Richmond
December 31, 2008	Kyle & Kathryn Mueller





# December, 2025

## at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Lockport

815.838.1832

[www.stpaulslockport.org](http://www.stpaulslockport.org)  
[spchhoff@gmail.com](mailto:spchhoff@gmail.com)

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 8 am Morning Prayer	2 8 am Morning Prayer 7 pm Elders meeting	3 8 am Morning Prayer 8:30 am Pvt. Conf./Abs. 5 pm Potluck 6 pm Advent Service	4 8 am Morning Prayer	5	6 9 am Church Decorating
7 Second Sunday of Advent 9 am Divine Worship 10:15 am Fellowship 10:40 am Adult bible class/Sunday School Noon Family lunch/cookie decorating Manna orders w/payment are du	8 8 am Morning Prayer	9 8 am Morning Prayer 11 am Lunch with Pastor 7 pm Church council meeting	10 8 am Morning Prayer 8:30 am Pvt. Conf./Abs. 5 pm Potluck 6 pm Advent Service	11 Circuit meeting at Hope Shorewood	12	13 8:30 am Trustee Meeting
14 Third Sunday of Advent 9 am Divine Worship 10:15 am Fellowship/Cookie exchange 10:40 am Adult bible class/Sunday School Manna orders ready for pickup	15 8 am Morning Prayer	16 8 am Morning Prayer	17 8 am Morning Prayer 8:30 am Pvt. Conf./Abs. 5 pm Potluck 6 pm Advent Service	18 8 am Morning Prayer 6 pm Circuit Lesson and Carols Service	19	20 9 am Long Range Planning Meeting
21 Fourth Sunday of Advent 9 am Divine Worship 10:15 am Fellowship 10:40 am Adult bible class/Sunday School	22 8 am Morning Prayer	23 8 am Morning Prayer	24 CHRISTMAS EVE 5:30 pm Pre-Service music & carol sing 6 pm Christmas Eve Worship CHRISTMAS EVE	25 CHRISTMAS DAY 9 am Christmas Day worship OFFICE CLOSED	26 OFFICE CLOSED	27
28 Feast of Holy Innocents 9 am Divine Worship 10:15 am Fellowship 10:40 am Adult bible class 6 pm Book of Concord	29	30	31 New Year's Eve 6 pm Divine Service	Jan. 1 New Year's Day OFFICE CLOSED	Jan. 2	Jan. 3 3-8 pm Epiphany party For volunteers





## **Christmas Season Services**

Wednesday, December 24  
5:30 pm – Music and  
Carol singing  
6 pm– Christmas Eve  
Candlelight Service

Thursday, December 25,  
9 am – Christmas Day  
Divine Service

Wednesday, December 31,  
6 pm - New Year's Eve  
Divine Service

## **St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church**

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