



St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church

127 Cherry Rd. NE, Massillon, OH 44646

330 832-7409

December 2025 Newsletter

The Bridge

Connecting Church with Home

Contact Us: Click to send an email

[Rev. Mark Kreemer, Senior Pastor](#)•[Kathryn Myers, Church Council President](#)•[Dr. Abigail Haake, Director of Music](#)•[Dr. Carol Butler, Newsletter Editor](#)•[Tracie Schmolz, Finance Administrator](#)•[Jackie Pritchett, Office Volunteer](#)

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“Keep Awake, The Lord Is Near”



Scripture Focus: Matthew 24:36–44; Isaiah 2:1–5; Romans 13:11–14 (Advent 1A)

Dear Friends in Christ,

Advent begins not in the warm glow of Christmas lights, but in the cool, bracing air of wakefulness. Cycle A opens with Jesus' words, *"Keep awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming."* The season starts with a summons: open your eyes; pay attention; hope is on the horizon.

The prophet Isaiah paints that horizon with holy imagination. He sees nations streaming to the mountain of the Lord. He sees swords hammered into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks. He sees a world where conflict is healed and creation flourishes. Advent lifts that vision like a lantern in the early morning darkness and says, "Walk toward this light."

Paul echoes the same theme in Romans: *"It is now the moment for you to wake from sleep."* In other words, live as though the dawn is breaking—because it is. Cast off whatever belongs to the night: resentment, fear, cynicism, apathy, the habits that harden the heart. Put on the armor of light. Put on Christ.

This first Advent gospel is not meant to frighten us. It is meant to focus us. Jesus insists that the world is not drifting aimlessly. God is moving history toward redemption. But we can easily sleepwalk through our days—preoccupied, anxious, numb, or distracted.

Advent calls us back to attentiveness. It asks:

- Where do you see signs of God stirring in your life?
- Which shadows are you ready to step out of?
- What vision of peace do you long to walk toward?

Wakefulness in the Christian sense is not nervous vigilance; it is hopeful readiness. It is the steady expectation that Christ is coming both at the end of all things and into the midst of your ordinary day.

Prayer

Come, Lord Jesus. Wake me where I am tired, steady me where I am fearful, turn my heart toward your dawn. Shape me as an instrument of peace, that I may walk in your light until the fullness of your kingdom comes. Amen.

Blessings,
Pastor Mark

Upcoming Events

The [church calendar](#) is always available on every page of the church [website](#) on the right side, along with the church address, phone number, email address, and Youtube link for the online services. The online calendar contains the most up-to-date listing of events.

[Click to see Church Calendar](#)

Weekly events

Sunday: **Worship** 10:00 am

Sunday School after church service, 11:30 am

Wednesday Snip-N-Stitch, 9:00 am

Thursday Bible Studies, 10:00 am

Thursday Chair Yoga following Bible Study, 11:00 am

Monthly events

No Worship and Music Committee this month (1st Tuesday of month)

Thursday, December 4, 6 pm: **Friendship Circle. (1st Thursday of month)**

Tuesday, December 9, 7 pm: **Church Council (2nd Tuesday of month)**

Friday, December 12, 4:30-6:00 pm: **Community Meal and Clothes Closet
(2nd Friday of month)**

Tuesday, December 23, 6 pm: **Finance Committee (3rd Tuesday of month)**

Special Events

[Madrigal Feast: Sunday, November 30, 4 pm](#)

Christmas Caroling: Saturday, December 6, 2 pm

Angel Tree Gift Tags: Unwrapped Gifts due December 7

Community Candlelight Walk: December 7th, starts at 5 pm

Wednesday Advent Services 7:00 PM:

Each Wednesday we will explore someone from the Lineage of Jesus.

December 3rd, Christ Lutheran, Rev. Mark Kreemer

December 10, St. Jacob Lutheran, Rev. Ash Welch

December 17, Holy Trinity Lutheran, Rev. Jeff Goggins

Adult Sunday School Class

After Sunday Worship: 11:30 am, second floor of Parish Hall

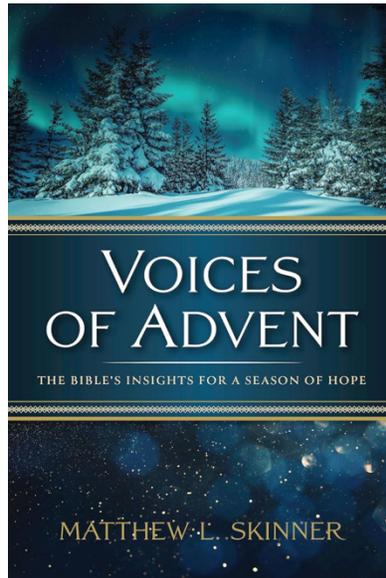
The True Spirit of Christmas

"...The Holy Spirit will come upon you..." (Luke 1:35)

The Holy Spirit played an integral role in the birth of Jesus Christ. Mary, Joseph, Elizabeth, Zechariah, and Simeon, among others, all knew the Spirit's power and leading as each played a part in the coming of the Christ child. As a result, the Spirit fruit of love, joy, and peace was evident in their lives, as it can be for us.

We gather at 11:30 on Sunday morning in the Parish Hall, top floor. An elevator is available for easy access. Note: the class will not meet on Sunday, December 28.

Thursday Morning Bible Study



Thursdays at 10:00 am in Parish Hall

In *Voices of Advent*, Matthew L. Skinner leads readers through biblical texts and explores how they shape our lives and Christmas celebrations. We listen as Jesus promises to return to us in the future, to John the Baptist as he prepares the way for the Messiah, to the faithful people and poets who anticipate the magnificence of Jesus's birth, and to the angels and visionaries who praise God when Christmas dawns. Listen carefully to the Bible's various perspectives that shape our preparations for Christmas; you'll hear hope in all of them. *Voices of Advent* helps readers experience Advent not only as the start of the Christian Church Year, but also as the powerful overture that sets the tone for the incredible story of Jesus.

Church Council Highlights

Report from November

- Pastor reported on members who are ill or hospitalized. We will continue to pray for those members on the prayer list.
- The theme for the area Lutheran churches Advent worship is the lineage of Jesus.
- The Capital Campaign bills have all been paid, and what a joyous piece of news that is! The remaining balance in the account is approximately \$23,000.
- The church owns some donated cemetery plots in three different cemeteries. We discussed keeping two and offering the rest for sale to interested parties.
- The idea of having a stewardship campaign in the near future was discussed. Council members were asked to bring ideas to the December meeting.

- There was discussion on the proposal to have Pastor Williamson be hired on a part time basis to help in the ministry to shut ins. There are details to be worked out as well as the possibility of this determined financially. Further discussion will continue in December.
-

Respectfully shared,

Kathryn Myers
President, Church Council

Join the Fellowship Committee in these events!

Report from Sue Reid:

Christmas Caroling – Saturday, December 6

Make plans to join us as we visit our home bound members and friends on **December 6** for Christmas caroling. We will meet at the church at 2:00 pm and divide into groups. After caroling, we will return to the church for a chicken dinner and share stories about caroling to these special members. **Sign up in the lounge so we can make sure we have enough food.**

Game Night – Sunday, January 18

Join us in the lounge at 5:00 pm to play games. We will play bingo with prizes, or you can bring a favorite board game or card game. Also bring an appetizer to share. This will be a fun chance to mix with our church family! Come and have fun!!

Valentine Dinner and Dance – Saturday, February 7

Mark your calendar for this fun event with our own DJ, Chuck Richards. We will gather for dinner at 5:00 pm, followed by music with Chuck. Watch for details of our menu and cost.

Shrove Pancake Dinner – Tuesday, February 17

Come for our annual Pancake Dinner starting at 5:00 pm. Enjoy a pancake bar with special toppings, sausage, applesauce, and drinks. Join in a Mardi Gras craft. This is our feast before we begin the Lenten season.

November Community Meal Report

The Community Meal in November was a great success. We fed 102 people! We had turkey and gravy, mashed potatoes, corn, coleslaw, and rolls.

To top it off, we had some scrumptious pies and other desserts baked by our congregation!

We are so blessed to have such a wonderful, caring group of people who are right there to help others, especially in these uncertain times. Thank you to all who helped with this mission of sharing and grace.

Blessings and Peace,

phone link: [Kim Oberlin](tel:)

email link: [Kim Oberlin](mailto:)

Clothes Closet Report

- We were very busy again in November, serving approximately 75 shoppers. We welcomed new and returning patrons.
- We provided many with blankets, coats, boots, hats and gloves. We thank you for your continuing generous donations. We had many shoppers tell us how grateful they are for this ministry.
- We are now putting out Christmas items as well as putting together some special gift bags for children. We also have games with choice of prizes ready for the December Community Meal. We use new items for prizes, and your donations would be greatly appreciated by all.
- We continue to need warm items, such as coats, gloves, boots, blankets, etc. We need children's warm items. Toddler items are needed, and we get very few to stock.

Thanking you,

Cindy Lash, Tracie Schmolt, and Carol Stoner

Scholarship Application Deadline: November 30

It's time to apply for or renew scholarship applications for the 2026 spring semester. All renewal applications are sent via email to the recipients from the previous semester. New applicants can request an application starting November 1 by emailing Lynda Klein at gllklein@sssnet.com for the application.

DEADLINE to be considered for the scholarship is November 30, 2025. Scholarship recipients will then be voted upon by the Scholarship Committee. Recipients will be notified, and rewards will be sent via postal mail to the address on the application within the month of December.

If you have changed your email and/or not received the renewal application, please notify the church office asap: officeadmin@stpaulsmassillon.org

Friendship Circle



Report from Kim Oberlin:

For November, JuDee Reed and I prepared a Thanksgiving feast for our girl friends: chicken casserole, corn, and homemade coleslaw. And of course, for dessert, there were pumpkin and pecan pies!

LaShell Williamson gave a presentation on “journaling the Bible.” She shared methods on how to get the most out of our time as we read and study the Bible. Her study Bible is amazing!

Next month is our annual Christmas party, and then we will take a break through the winter months and reconvene in April.

May everyone have a happy and healthy holiday season. We hope to see all our ladies, and maybe also some new faces next year!

Blessings to all,
Kim

Salvation Army Gift Tags



Gift tags are still available for the Salvation Army “Christmas Assistance” program on the Christmas tree located in the portico. The toys on the tags are only for ideas. **Whatever you buy will not be given to that child on the tag.** All gifts are put on tables for parents to come in and choose the gifts for their children. So, you can buy anything you want.

Here’s the process:

Get a tag
Buy any toy
Turn it in unwrapped

Unwrapped gifts are due at the church on December 7 or you can take them directly to the Salvation Army. Thank you for giving these children a Merry Christmas. If you have any questions, please contact any member of the Welfare and Social Committee.

Christmas Cookies from the Kitchen Angels Distributed November 23



3,447 total cookies. That's 288 dozen! Impressive work, Kitchen Angels!

Christmas Collections Continuing



The Welfare and Social Committee is still collecting nonperishable food and miscellaneous items for our Community Meal families for Christmas. These items will be distributed at our Community Meal on Friday, December 12.

If you have questions, please contact Barb Palmer at 330-244-1602.

These dates are just guidelines. Please feel free to donate any of the listed items:

- October 19: Tea and coffee
- October 26: Peanut butter and jelly
- November 2: Canned soups and pork n beans
- November 9: Cereal and mixes (cake, brownies, muffins)
- November 16: Canned fruits and vegetables
- November 23: Spaghetti sauce, pasta, instant potatoes
- November 30: Paper products (paper towels, toilet paper)
- December 7: Bar soap, toothpaste, toothbrush



Gift bags lined the hall last year in preparation for the Christmas Dinner.

Thank you for your generosity!

Barb Palmer

Family-Friendly Advent Movie Screening



Lutherans in Massillon are teaming up for a family-friendly movie night at Christ Lutheran (3545 Amherst Ave NW) on Sunday, December 21, at 4:30 p.m.

We will screen *A Charlie Brown Christmas* (1965) & *A Star in the Night* (1945), two beloved short films that shine with hope, generosity, and the true meaning of Christmas. A potluck dinner will be shared at the intermission between films.

Come in comfy clothes, bring a friend or grandchild, and enjoy a simple, joyful rhythm of storytelling, fellowship, and food as we make room for Advent hope together.

Steel Drum Band Starting



Coming in 2026: The St. Paul's Steelband! Through a generous donation of five instruments, Eleanor Manes will be starting a steelband for the congregation and greater Massillon community. No musical background necessary, and any and all ages/skills are welcome. For more information, please contact [Ellie](#).

Cathedral Concert: OPUS 216 on November 9

OPUS 216 once again amazed us with their artistry, virtuosity, and wide-ranging repertoire.



The program contained music from American composers Florence Price, George Gershwin, Scott Joplin, Fats Waller, Aaron Copland, and Philip Glass.



Ensemble members greeted their fans in a short reception after the performance.

Firestone Madrigal Singers

On Sunday, November 30, the Firestone CLC Madrigal Singers will visit our morning service. Then, later that afternoon, starting at 4:00, they will present a full entertainment. We will share a light meal of charcuterie and dessert in the Parish Hall.

\$20 for adults, \$10 for children 10 and under.

[Order tickets online](#)



Community Candlelight Walk

See you at the Community Candlelight Walk:
December 7, 5-7 pm.

There will be continuous music from St. Paul's adult choir, bell choir, and vocal and instrumental soloists. Rehearsals are in full swing in preparation for this night!

Enjoy this chance also to visit our neighborhood churches.

Downtown Massillon ★ Sunday, December 7, 2025



FREE!
Everyone's welcome!

Scan this QR Code for details



Questions?
330.833.3146

Churches Open 5:00–7:30 p.m.

Start anywhere; choose your own route; set your own pace
Stroll amid luminarias & holiday lights to nine historic churches
Enjoy Christmas music, history, architecture & stained glass windows
Visit four additional venues & luminaria-lined historic Fourth Street
Enjoy cookies & warm beverages with live music at MassMu

Festival of Music & Candlelighting Ceremony

St. Mary's Church 7:45 p.m.

Candlelighting Ceremony with the 2025 Honoree
Washington High School Advanced Choir & Washingtonians
Divine Mercy Parish Choir ★ Massillon East Side Singers

Pre-Walk Concert

4:00–5:00 p.m.

Grace United Church of Christ ★ 933 Main Avenue West

Historic Churches

5:00–7:30 ★ **Music, Architecture & Holiday Spirit**

St. John's United Church of Christ ★ 101 Tremont Avenue SE

St. Timothy's Episcopal Church ★ 226 Third Street SE

St. George's Greek Orthodox Church ★ 364 First Street SE

First United Methodist Church ★ 301 Lincoln Way East

St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church ★ 322 Third Street SE

Mt. Calvary Baptist Church ★ 27 Fourth Street NE

Central Presbyterian Church ★ 47 Second Street NE

St. Paul's Lutheran Church ★ 127 Cherry Road NE

St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church ★ 206 Cherry Road NE

Official Refreshment & Warming Station

5:00–7:30 ★ **Free Cookies, Cocoa, Coffee & Music**

Massillon Museum ★ 121 Lincoln Way East

Participating Venues

5:00–7:30 ★ **Holiday Treasures**

Massillon Railroad Club ★ 301 Lincoln Way East (back)—Model Trains!

Massillon Public Library ★ 208 Lincoln Way East

Five Oaks/Massillon Woman's Club ★ 210 Fourth Street NE

Historic Fourth Street NE—Lined with 800 Luminarias

Massillon Connections—Puppet Show ★ 308 Erie Street South

Festival of Music & Candlelighting Ceremony

7:45–9:00 p.m.

St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church ★ 206 Cherry Road NE

AQUA



INTERNET / TV / PHONE
MCTV
We go the extra mile.

Farmers National Bank ★ Massillon WestStark Chamber of Commerce
Buehler's Fresh Foods ★ BJ's ★ Downtown Massillon Association

Prayer List Update

Steve Kress, Lenny Herd, Loren Veigel, Eric Gerber, Cindy Lash, Judy Hall, Bonnie & Dave Dourm, Tom Fry, Carol Sargent, Kenneth & Jean Dexter, Anna Langenfeld, Arthur Barrett, Cindy Nash, Karen & Paul Daily, Susan Via, and Richard Green.

December Birthdays

Favorite hymns:

Pat Myers, December 25: “Softly and Tenderly” and “Just as I Am”

Dec 3--Thomas Wright
Dec 5--Karen Lunkwitz
Dec 5--Charles Stuck
Dec 5--Vera Keefer
Dec 6--Ralph Burns
Dec 6--Amy Burkett
Dec 9--Judy Lemasters

Dec 10--Carol Marlow
Dec 11--Jason Deuble
Dec 17--Laurel Borkowski
Dec 20--Debra Hannum
Dec 21--Sharon Johns
Dec 21--Christine Bates
Dec 21--Jennifer Maurer

Dec 23--Evelyn Eclen
Dec 25--Patricia Myers
Dec 27--Lisa Skelly
Dec 30--Judith Hall
Dec 31--Kayla Hepler

Has your birthday or anniversary been missing from the published lists? If so, please contact the office so we can add it to our database. Thank you!

December Wedding Anniversaries

We celebrate with these couples and congratulate them on another milestone in their lives together!

Norman and Heidi Hall



We were married on December 11, 1983, at Epworth United Methodist Church in Massillon by Reverend James Mathatas. It was a very small wedding with only family present. The pastor took the pictures, and this is the only one that turned out. The rest are double exposures with children and Santa Claus.

Robert and Julia Englehart



The Engleharts are celebrating their 35th wedding anniversary on December 28. They were married in Sarasota, Florida. "We are still happy!" Julia and Robert are pleased to say.

Dec 7--James & Becky Johnson

Dec 11--Norman & Heidi Hall

Dec 14--James & Patricia Myers

Dec 18--Dwight & Carol Butler

Dec 19--Jack & Marsha Fortune

Dec 28--Thomas & Deb Schmolt

Dec 28--Robert & Julia Englehart

Thank You Notes

Cindy Lash

Dear Friends in Christ,

Thank you so much for your prayers and comfort during my recent illness. Your prayers, cards, phone calls, and texts brightened each day and got me through so much.

I can't thank you enough for your wonderful kindness. 🙏

Love,
Cindy Lash

Becky Johnson

I just want to thank my amazing church family for all the well wishes, cards, and especially for the prayers for my recovery. I was overwhelmed by all the prayers!

Everything went so smoothly, it felt like every path was paved by your prayers. I feel so incredibly blessed to be a part of our church community. Each one of you has touched my life in so many ways.

May God bless each of you,
Becky Johnson

The Legacy Project of Stark

Dear Craig and friends at St. Paul's,

We just wanted to "Thank You" for your generous donation towards our work with students! Because of partners like you, we are able to mentor over 450 students each week in Massillon!

We are also able to help over 59 families through our family engagement program. So again, please know what a blessing it is that we have friends like you that care for our community alongside us.

Blessings to you,

Eugene Lingenhoel, Founder

The Legacy Project

Christmas Gifts for Staff

Dear Church Family,

Just a reminder that we are receiving monetary donations for our staff Christmas gifts. Through the month of December, you may place your contribution in the offering plate, marked "Staff Christmas," bring it to the church office during the week (9 am to 1 pm on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Friday), or mail it to the church. Giving electronically is always an option as well.

Thank you for your generosity as we remember our staff this Christmas.

Greg Klein,
Staff Support Committee Chair

Flowers for the Altar for 2025

Please text Sue Ambrosic at 330-844-7648 if you would like to have the Altar or Throne flowers for 2025.

The cost of Altar flowers is \$40 per Sunday; the Throne flowers are \$28. Please contact Patty Carmola if you have any questions at 330-832-9405. You will be billed directly by *Carmola's Flowers* in Massillon.

Council Members

[Kathryn Myers](#), president
[Greg Klein](#), vice-president
[Dan Farrar](#), treasurer
[Jackie Pritchett](#), secretary

Dwight Butler
Gary Collard
Shane Jackson
Jim Johnson
Lynda Klein

Dennis Morgan
Barb Palmer
Sue Reid
Brady Rupp

Committee Members

EVANGELISM

[Kathryn Myers, Chair](#)
Amy Burkett,
Sue Ambrosic
Gayle Jackson
Becky Johnson
Cindy Lash
Deidra Monastra

FINANCE

[Dan Farrar, Chair](#)
Shane Jackson
Greg Klein
John Liebermann
Patty Long
Brady Rupp
Tracie Schmolt
John Stanko

WORSHIP AND MUSIC

[Greg Klein, Chair](#)
Carol Butler
Dwight Butler
Abigail Haake
Karl Kalk
Patty Long
Kathryn Myers
Kim Oberlin

STAFF SUPPORT

[Greg Klein, Chair](#)
Jennifer Nelson Maurer
Jackie Pritchett
Elizabeth Schehl

**WELFARE AND
SOCIAL ACTION**

Barb Palmer, Chair

Christine Bates
Judy Fichter
Lynda Klein
Deidra Monastra
Kathryn Myers
Kim Oberlin
JuDee Reed
David Stoner
LaShell Williamson

**PARISH
FELLOWSHIP**

Sue Reid, Chair

Sue Ambrosic
Gary Collard
Becky Johnson
Loren Veigel

**MISSION
ENDOWMENT**

Craig Maurer, Chair

Sue Ambrosic
Karl Kalk
Lynda Klein
Phyllis Staver

**PROPERTY
MANAGEMENT**

Jim Johnson, Chair

Joe Hepler
John Liebermann
Dennis Morgan, Liaison
for Chair
Paul Mutchler
John Stanko

SCHOLARSHIP

Lynda Klein, Chair

Amy Burkett
John Liebermann
Lisa Skelly

YOUTH AND PARISH EDUCATION

Jackie Pritchett, Chair

Scott Larson
Deidra Monastra
Sue Reid

Serving During the Month of December

If you are interested in serving for a future month, click on the contact person's email link.

ASSISTING MINISTER

Contact [Karl Kalk](#)

12/7 Patty Long
12/14 Veronica Kreemer
12/21 Sue Reid
12/24 7 pm Karl Kalk
12/24 10:30 pm Scott Larson
12/28 Kathryn Myers

**COMMUNION
ASSISTANTS**

Contact [Kathryn Myers](#)

12/7 Dennis Morgan & Kathryn Myers
12/14 Brady Rupp & Sue Reid
12/21 Dwight Butler & Jim Johnson
12/28 Jackie Pritchett & Gary Collard

GREETERS

Contact [Karl Kalk](#)

12/7 Pastor Lynn & Lashelle
Williamson
12/14 Dick & Robyn Cordes
12/21 Russ & Mary Ann Poling
12/28 Greg & Linda Klein

SACRISTAN

Contact [Kathryn Myers](#)

Kathryn Myers

LAY LECTOR

Contact [Karl Kalk](#)

Sydney Johnson

USHERS

Contact [Dick Longworth](#)

Jeff Akey
Gary Collard
Richard Evert
Dan Farrar

New Assisted Hearing Devices Available



Four assisted listening devices are available at the sound system table in the back of the sanctuary at the beginning of worship. Please see Jim Johnson or John Stanko if you need assistance with these devices.

You can also use your smartphone to access the system. Go to your app store and download the **WaveCAST** app. Then connect to the sanctuary Wi-Fi:

Network: sound media

Password: Sound127

Once connected to the Wi-Fi, open the WaveCAST app and tap on **St. Paul's** to access the worship service. If you need help, please see Jim or John.

St. Paul's Phone App



Choose My Church by Pushpay from the App Store.

To take advantage of all the app's features, you must create an account. Get notifications and reminders of upcoming events, access our live stream worship and worship bulletins, send prayer requests, see the church calendar, and give electronically.

St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church

We are a community of believers called together to be the Body of Christ for the sake of our families, community and our world. We invite you to join us for worship on Sunday mornings as we celebrate God's redeeming and freeing grace in Jesus Christ our Lord.



The Reverend Mark Kreemer officiating.

Thank you to all who have submitted photos for this newsletter. To see more photos, follow the Facebook pages listed below.



Cathedral Concerts Facebook Page



St. Paul's Facebook Page

**St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church
127 Cherry Rd. NE, Massillon, OH 44646
330 832-7409
Office Hours: T, W, F 9am-1pm**



ELCA Vision: A world experiencing the difference God's grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation.