

## St. Paul's Lutheran Family

January 2024  
NEWSLETTER

### There's a Place for You at St. Paul's!



From Pastor Mary Lou

Happy New Year, St. Paul's! **Does it seem like we're in the 24<sup>th</sup> year of the new millennium?** Wasn't the year 2000 just yesterday? The new millennium certainly has flown by!

St. Paul's has experienced some difficult and sad changes in the last couple of years, but Christ's church perseveres, and a new pastor, yet to be revealed to you, will arrive in this new year. That's something to rejoice about! You will continue to experience change after you welcome a new pastor, as the Spirit guides you in new and exciting ways to be church in the year 2024 and beyond.

The stress of changing pastoral leadership can cause uncertainty and anxiety for many in the congregation. But we must remember we are people of faith, and God takes care of God's children. In our humanness, we worry, stress, feel uncertain and anxious, but God loves us and is there to help us through those times of angst. We only need to trust God and have faith that God is in charge of our future. No matter what happens, God will make sure we are okay. That doesn't mean things will always turn out the way we want, but God is in charge and sees beyond our immediate future and asks us to have faith.

As I write this, Christmas is just over, and for the materialistic, secular world, it's now time to move on. Christmas decorations go on sale for half price, Valentine paraphernalia take their place on store shelves, and soon Christmas and the year 2023 becomes a memory.

But for us in the church, we still celebrate the birth of God's son for the 12 days of Christmas up to Epiphany on January 6.

So what is Epiphany?

The word epiphany comes from the Greek word epiphaneia, which means appearance or manifestation. It is an important word for liturgical churches. Epiphany is observed annually on January 6. It refers to the wise men, who were the first Gentiles to see the manifestation of God's appearance in the baby Jesus.

In the early church, January 6 was a day for baptism. The central significance of Epiphany is that Christ came as the Light of the World, not just for the Jews but for Gentiles as well. Christ's light is for all of God's children all over the globe.

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Carson City, NV 89701

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Church Office Hours  
Monday, Wednesday, and Friday: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

[stpaulcarson@gmail.com](mailto:stpaulcarson@gmail.com) [www.stpaulslutheranfamily.com](http://www.stpaulslutheranfamily.com) 775 882-3020

In France, to celebrate Epiphany, children from Christian homes often put oats in their shoes on the evening before January 6. The oats are for the camels of the “Wise Men.” When they awoken the next morning, the children hope to find the oats gone and gifts left in their shoes.

And so, St. Paul’s, as we move into this new year, into Epiphany and beyond, we can look forward to what is to come, and no matter what happens in 2024, we must always remember that we are in God’s hands. As we hear the Epiphany Scriptures read in worship during Epiphany, the baby we just celebrated will be revealed to us as God’s son, and we need to stay strong in our faith, let go and trust God, who gave us the gift of the baby Jesus.

We pray for strength and guidance and recognize the opportunities that the future holds. It’s going to be a great year, filled with new beginnings and exciting opportunities, as you celebrate the installation of a new pastor and celebrate St. Paul’s ministry in Carson City, all while working with a new pastor in fulfilling the ministry God has for St. Paul’s future. God’s mission for St. Paul’s will be an epiphany as God reveals new and exciting ministry opportunities. And of course, you might just be a healthier congregation spiritually, emotionally, physically, and mentally, as individuals and as a whole. Stay alert to what God is doing with you and through you in this place at this time and in the year 2024.

Happy New Year, St. Paul’s! There is much to look forward to.

Pastor Mary Lou



## *Interim Pastor Installation*

The Reverend Mary Lou Petitjean was installed as St. Paul's Interim Pastor  
on December 3, 2023.

Welcome, Pastor Mary Lou!

We look forward to your service to our congregation and to your insight and leadership.



## *Children's Time During the Service*



# Servants Serving

## Altar Guild for January

Nikki Rohrs and Vicki Hamilton

## Greeters

January 7<sup>th</sup> Judy McPhail  
January 14<sup>th</sup> Ruth Fitzgerald  
January 21<sup>st</sup> Joan Schultz  
January 28<sup>th</sup> Carol Arneson

## Readers

January 7<sup>th</sup> Linda Wilson  
January 14<sup>th</sup> Steve Ranson  
January 21<sup>st</sup> Kim Neiman  
January 28<sup>th</sup> Daniel Neiman

## Live-streaming Team

Holly McPhail and Nick Cotsonis

## Musicians

Dave Lingsjo, Principle Musician  
Vicki Hamilton, Organist  
Carol Arneson, Choir Director

## Ministry Leaders

Altar Guild: Vicki Hamilton  
Greeters: Ruth Fitzgerald  
Readers: Judy McPhail  
Counters: Mary DeFelice  
Communion Assistants: Judy McPhail  
Youth Acolytes: Traci Angel

## Communion Assistants

January 7<sup>th</sup> Heidi Jones  
January 14<sup>th</sup> Jay Olshen  
January 21<sup>st</sup> Sharon Gesick  
January 28<sup>th</sup> Deanna Fine

## Counters

January 7<sup>th</sup> Judy McPhail and Nikki Rohrs  
January 14<sup>th</sup> Jeanne Russell and Jay Olshen  
January 21<sup>st</sup> Judy McPhail and Greg Griffith  
January 28<sup>th</sup> Mary DeFelice and  
Jean Opperman

## Acolytes

Clay Woslum and Greg Griffith

## Youth Acolytes – TBA

## Ushers – TBA

## Ministry Leaders' E-mail

Altar Guild and Card Ministry: Vicki Hamilton  
[victoriahamilton9@gmail.com](mailto:victoriahamilton9@gmail.com)

Greeters: Ruth Fitzgerald  
[mrsrfitz17@gmail.com](mailto:mrsrfitz17@gmail.com)

Counters: Mary DeFelice  
[Marenang@hotmail.com](mailto:Marenang@hotmail.com)

Readers: Judy McPhail  
[ROMAC1945@outlook.com](mailto:ROMAC1945@outlook.com)

Ushers: Dave Harrell  
[davidharrell93@yahoo.com](mailto:davidharrell93@yahoo.com)

Communion Assistants: Judy McPhail  
[stpaulcarson@gmail.com](mailto:stpaulcarson@gmail.com)

Stewardship: Deanna Fine  
[deannajofine@gmail.com](mailto:deannajofine@gmail.com)

### Ushers are Still Needed!

The Usher Ministry is in desperate need of ushers for Sunday services.

If you are interested in volunteering for this important position, please call Dave Harrell at 775 315-4661 or email him at [davidharrell93@yahoo.com](mailto:davidharrell93@yahoo.com).



A Prayer Chain Leader is Needed!


If you can help, please call or email the church office. Thanks!





**Worship services are held each Sunday at 9:00 a.m.**

Our worship service is live-streamed via YouTube.

Directions for YouTube: 

Copy and paste this link into your web browser:

<https://www.youtube.com/@st.paulslutheranfamily7828>

The link will take you to St. Paul's YouTube channel where you can watch the live service.

To watch recorded services, click on "Playlist" and then choose the Sunday service/video you want to watch.

## January Birthdays



*Enjoy your special day!*

- |                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 3 Jessica Lunz     | 10 Avery Boggs     |
| 3 James Opperman   | 11 Karen Revelle   |
| 4 Nikki Rohrs      | 12 David Anderson  |
| 5 Traci Angel      | 13 Marla Johnson   |
| 6 Peter Elverum    | 20 Clay Woslum     |
| 9 Lisa Hillenbrand | 25 Greg Griffith   |
| 9 Scott Thunder    | 25 Hannelore Hanke |
| 10 Hope Chowanski  | 31 Gayle Kennett   |



### **FIREFIGHTERS/PEACE OFFICERS**

Andy Steyn, Brian Hillenbrand, Tina Sherman, Mark Dickens, John Gould, Michael Gould, and Jason Wildblood.

### **SERVING IN THE ARMED FORCES**

Raelynn Norman (niece of Judy McPhail), Matthew Russell (nephew of Judy McPhail), Brandon Luterick, Heather Joyner (Johnson), Peter Elverum, Sarah McGee, Bryce Stimka, Olivia Lesperance, John Duffy (nephew of Sharon and Tom Gesick), and Justin Snowden.

**STITCHERS** meet in Friendship Hall the second and fourth Tuesday of each month from 9:00 a.m. to noon.



**WELCA Bible Study**  
Please note:  
**Bible Study**  
will not meet in January.

**See you in February!**

Charlotte LaCombe is St. Paul's new Historian. If you have any photos or stories about the church from past years you'd like to preserve, please contact Charlotte at [pinyons@sbcglobal.net](mailto:pinyons@sbcglobal.net). Thanks!





After a short break, the choir will begin rehearsals on Wednesday, January 10, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. We usually rehearse for about an hour. So, if you like to sing and can spare some time on a Wednesday evening, please come join us.

We will practice most Wednesdays. Any change in schedules will be announced.

Thank you! Carol Arneson

*Heidi, Holly and I would like to thank the congregation for the wonderful gift you gave us. We really appreciate your generosity in giving us a monetary gift. Heidi Jones, Holly McPhail, and Judy McPhail*



Thank you to Vicki Hamilton, Joan Schultz, Carol Arneson, Rachel Olson, and Kelli Boggs for arranging the beautiful poinsettias in the sanctuary this Christmas and to Jeanne Russell for arranging the candelabra on the altar.

Many thanks also to everyone who volunteered to serve during Christmas Eve worship services.

*We couldn't have done it without you!*



*I want to thank everyone who contributed to the staff Christmas gift. Your kindness and generosity are very much appreciated. Brette O'Connell Elander*

**We are grateful to each and every member of St. Paul's for their love, care, and devotion to our church. You are a blessing indeed!**



**EPIPHANY**, also called Feast of the Epiphany, Theophany, or Three Kings' Day, (from the Greek *epiphaneia*, "manifestation"), is a Christian holiday commemorating the first manifestation of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, represented by the Magi, and the manifestation of his divinity, as it occurred at his baptism in the Jordan River and at his first miracle at Cana in Galilee. Epiphany is one of the three principal and oldest festival days of the Christian church (the other two are Easter and Christmas).

Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Anglicans, and other Western churches observe the feast on January 6, while some Eastern Orthodox churches celebrate Epiphany on January 19, since their Christmas Eve falls on January 6.

The festival originated in the Eastern church, where it at first included a commemoration of Christ's birth. In Rome by 354, Christ's birth was being celebrated on December 25, and later in the 4th century the church in Rome began celebrating Epiphany on January 6. In the Western church, the festival primarily commemorates the visit by the Magi to the infant Jesus, which is seen as evidence that Christ, the Jewish Messiah, came also for the salvation of Gentiles. In the East, it commemorates the baptism of Jesus and celebrates the revelation that the incarnate Christ was both fully God and fully man.

In the West, the evening preceding Epiphany is called Twelfth Night. The time between December 25 and January 6 is known as the Twelve Days of Christmas. Epiphany is celebrated with special pastries in many countries, and children often receive small gifts in their shoes in honor of the Magi's gifts to the infant Jesus. The holiday also has a number of traditions involving water as a reflection of Jesus's baptism, including the blessing of houses with holy water.

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Epiphany>





New Year, a time for fresh starts and reflections. As the clock ticks to midnight, people around the globe bid farewell to the old and welcome the new with open arms. It's a moment filled with hope, resolutions, and a touch of magic.

Celebrated on January 1<sup>st</sup>, New Year marks the beginning of a brand-new chapter. Many embrace the tradition of setting resolutions, aiming to improve themselves in the coming year. Whether it's hitting the gym, learning a new skill, or simply being kinder, the resolutions embody the spirit of growth and positive change.

The iconic countdown to midnight is a global phenomenon. From the dazzling ball drop in Times Square to fireworks illuminating city skies, the world unites in this shared moment of transition. It's a time to celebrate achievements, no matter how small, and to look forward to what lies ahead.

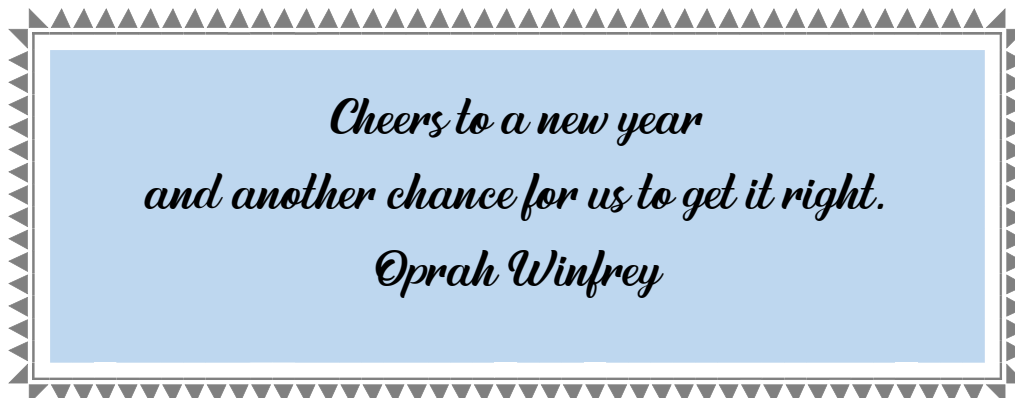
New Year's Eve parties are a staple, bringing together friends and family to toast to the future. Laughter, music, and a sense of camaraderie fill the air as people revel in the joy of the present while anticipating the possibilities of tomorrow.

Cultures worldwide have unique traditions to welcome the New Year. In Spain, it's customary to eat twelve grapes at the stroke of midnight, symbolizing good luck for each month ahead. In Japan, the ringing of temple bells echoes across the country, cleansing away the past year's misfortunes.

Reflecting on the past year is an integral part of the New Year experience. It's a time to acknowledge the year's accomplishments, learn from challenges, and set intentions for the days to come. This introspection allows individuals to enter the New Year with a clear perspective, ready to embrace opportunities and overcome obstacles.

As the clock strikes midnight, a wave of optimism sweeps across the globe. The New Year is a blank canvas, inviting everyone to paint their stories anew. It's a time to dream, aspire, and believe that the best is yet to come.

So, whether you're counting down in a crowded square or enjoying a quiet night at home, New Year is a universal reminder of the beauty of new beginnings. As the calendar turns, let's welcome the future with open hearts, hopeful spirits, and the promise of a brighter tomorrow. Cheers to the New Year and the endless possibilities it brings!





## Winter To-do List for Little Lutherans by Kimberly Knowle-Zeller

For those in certain regions of the U.S., winter brings cold days and long, dark nights. After holiday celebrations and ringing in the New Year, the winter months provide ample opportunity to deepen our faith lives as a family. Whether you're longing for the warmth again or embracing the snow, here are a few ideas for faith formation this winter:

### The light of the world

The season of **Epiphany** is all about Jesus's light to the world. As a family, pick a country and learn all you can about its customs, people, language, food, and history. Find a recipe that lifts up the local flavors. Pray for the country and its people. Give thanks that God's light shines for them too. You can always connect with your **companion synod** and see how you can partner with them.

### The light of nature

Even with a landscape of bare trees, nature provides plenty of opportunities to study God's creation. Go on a winter hike and use all your senses. Immerse yourself in the beauty. Look for signs of hope. Feed the birds. Make snow angels. As you walk, share with one another what you noticed and say a prayer of thanks for God's diverse creation.

### The light of play

Who doesn't love a fort? Gather blankets, tables, pillows, sheets, and chairs and make a fort. Have everyone come inside and offer thanks for shelter. Say a prayer for those who don't have adequate shelter. Find resources in your community to see how you can help the homeless in your area.

### The light of Lent

As we approach the season of Lent, find a way as a family to honor the season. Find a family devotional that you can read together each day. Take on a new way to pray together (coloring, singing, sitting in silence or writing your own prayers). Write a letter each week to someone who doesn't always get thanked and tell them how much you appreciate their work and notice all they do (school janitors, bus drivers, secretaries, mail carriers, cashiers). Decide together what you want to do and be gentle with yourselves if you don't keep up with it all season.

### The light of service

Find a way to get into the community and share your love and time. Perhaps the nursing home, library or animal shelter has opportunities. You can collect donations as a family and donate to a local cause. Talk about all the ways you can show God's love through service, a smile, a lending hand or listening.

### The light of worship

Have worship in your home one day. Get together to pray, sing songs, read the Bible and bless one another. Your service doesn't have to be long or formal. Talk as a family about your favorite parts of worship and why. You can use your church's bulletins or make up your own order. Most importantly, have fun and take turns leading!

### The light of nourishment

Who doesn't love warm soup on a cold night? Invite your neighbors to a **soup swap**. Everyone brings soup and extra containers so all get to take home a variety of soup. As you swap, you'll get to share family recipes, tell stories and deepen relationships with the people who live closest to you. You can even make extra soup for families who have new babies at home or for someone returning home from surgery or treatments.

### The light of rest

Take time to simply be. Light candles. Sit by the fire. Turn off cellphones and televisions. Be together as a family. Read books or play games. Share your highs and lows. Look each other in the eyes. Know that in those still, quiet moments God's voice can be heard.

Here's to the winter months and the light of God's love that shines for each of us.



All youth who are in the 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade are welcome to join youth group!  
We meet every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays after service and Faith Link.  
If you know anyone who is interested or has any questions,  
please call Traci Angel at 775 721-5495.

### Thank You!



#### Christmas Angel Tree

The Youth would like to extend a huge **THANK YOU** for all the help to create a wonderful Christmas for fifteen children and seniors in our community that were in need of Christmas. Each person had a bag filled with items. Our amazing quilters out did themselves and worked way overtime to make sure everyone had a blanket! Your generosity truly made the Holidays **BRIGHT!**

Our youth are so grateful for all the outpouring of love! They did a little shopping for what angel tree items were left from the donations we received. From **ALL our YOUTH** – Thank you for helping with the true spirit of the season!

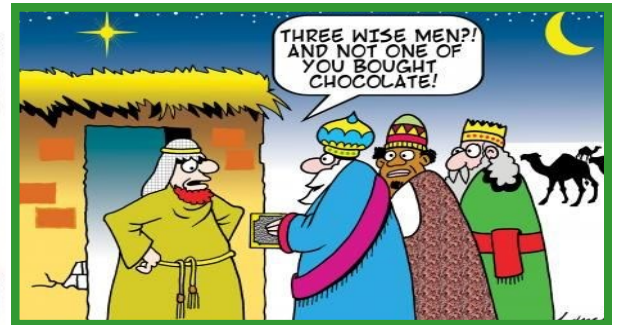
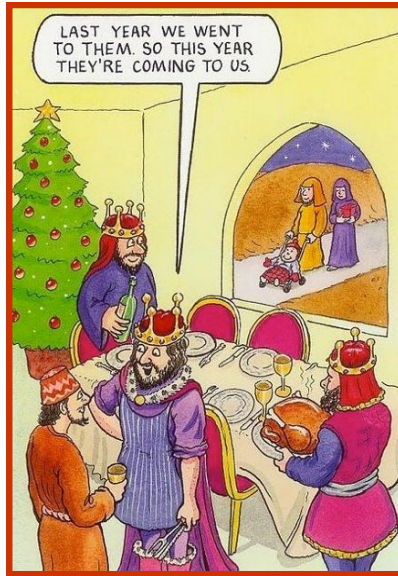
Traci Angel

The Youth Group had a fun Christmas Season! They helped make holidays bright for children of all ages! They were elves at the North Pole for the Polar Express Train. The Grinch showed up at church for our Christmas Program and hosted the Coffee Hour. They also helped Santa with giving gifts and a party.

The youth group had their Christmas Party on December 29<sup>th</sup> with a LOCK-IN and gift exchange. Our Youth Leaders are so very proud of all that our youth do!



The Youth Group would like to wish our church family a **Blessed New Year!**  
Thank you for all your support throughout 2023!





**Sunday**

Youth Group 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays after worship  
NA, 7:00 p.m.

**Monday, January 1<sup>st</sup>**

New Year's Day

**Church office closed**

**Tuesday (Beginning January 9<sup>th</sup>)**

Confirmation Class, 6:00 p.m.

**No WELCA Bible Study in January**

**Wednesday (Beginning January 10<sup>th</sup>)**

Choir practice, 6:00 p.m.

**Thursday**

Strings, 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. (During the school year)

**January, 11<sup>th</sup>**

Executive Meeting, 6:00 p.m.

**January 18<sup>th</sup>**

Council Meeting, 6:00 p.m.

**Are you or your group interested in booking  
Friendship Hall in the coming year?**

**Then please come by the church office and  
pick up a Facility Use Form.**

**Thanks!**



*Worship services are held  
every Sunday at 9:00 a.m.*

**This Month's Worship Schedule:**

**January 7<sup>th</sup>, January 14<sup>th</sup>, January 21<sup>st</sup>  
and January 28<sup>th</sup>.**



Our office assistant is in the  
church office

**Monday, Wednesday, and  
Friday** from

**9:00 a.m. to noon.**

If you would like to contribute to the newsletter,  
please have your submissions into the church  
office by the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month unless  
otherwise directed.

All worship volunteer lists, photos, and ministry  
articles are due at this time as well.

Thank you!

