

Living Waters

February 2025

Liminal Spaces

Pastor Zak

I always find that February is a challenging month for me. The excitement and the anticipation of the holidays is behind us as I look forward to President's Day and the mattress sales it offers. The weather is still quite frigid as we work our way through an arctic front that seems to have no end. Football season is ending and baseball hasn't quite begun. Even the church is going through a liminal/ordinary season during this "time after Epiphany," as we prepare ourselves for Lent and *gasp* Easter beyond.

Every year, I feel like I try to look past February, which is made all the easier as it only contains 28 days most years. This year I am trying to slow down and appreciate these liminal times and spaces. I'm so used to always planning and looking ahead, that I often overlook what is right in front of me. I would venture to think that I am not alone in always looking ahead, rather than appreciating the day in front of me.

This month my mantra is a simple one borrowed from Psalm 118, "This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it." This season, this day, this moment is one worthy of rejoicing over as a precious gift from God. I need to allow myself the grace to fully appreciate the handiwork of God's creation each and every day, especially in seasons of slower pacing or transition. Rather than always looking ahead, I hope to do better at looking around, living in the present moment. God is present in all we do always, especially the mundane and ordinary, which is a reality worthy of our rejoicing.

A Note from Vicar Nicholas...

Grief Lectionary Bible Study and Support Groups

We have heard the desire expressed by community members to offer continued grief support groups after the Advent series was completed. We are happy to announce that we will be offering a monthly Grief Lectionary Bible Study and Grief Support Group that will be on the first Sunday of each month following worship, around 11am-noon. All are welcome to join for one or all of these days, but it is most meaningful for group cohesion to be as consistent as possible. Sessions will be held on 2/2, 3/2, 4/6, 5/4, 6/1, and 7/6.



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Worship Information

In Person

Sundays

Worship in the sanctuary at 8am and 10am.

Online/Livestream

Watch the service live on [YouTube](#), or anytime after that!

Altar Flowers Sign-Up

Sign up now using our [digital sign-up](#)! Two bouquet slots available for each Sunday; each bouquet is \$30.

Congregational Life...

2025 St. Paul Leadership

Thank you to everyone who attended the Congregational meeting on January 19th. The following St. Paul Lutheran Church lay leaders have been elected by the Congregation to serve in the coming year. We thank them for their willingness to lead the ministries of the church in coordination with the Staff:

Council Officers

President, Dan Pedersen
Vice President, Doreen Fritz
Secretary, Vacant
Treasurer, Kathleen Murphy

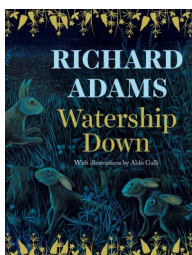
Council Representatives

Community Engagement, Marti Seaton
Faith Formation, Julie Frakes
Property, Dave Bard
Stewardship, Kristen Rosenwinkel
Worship Music and Arts, Carol Freidheim
Youth, Lisa Speidel and Ginger Riccio
At Large, Chris Bard and Hannah Hull-Sansone

The Secretary position is still vacant at this time. If you are interested in serving or know someone who is interested, please contact Pastor Zak or Dan Pedersen. And, a reminder that a special congregational meeting has been scheduled for February 16 at 11am to conduct the 2nd vote on the changes to the constitution. Voting members are encouraged to attend.

Book Club

You are invited to come to the next St. Paul Book Club meeting on Monday, February 3 at 7 PM in the Cafe. The group will discuss *Watership Down* by Richard Adams, an adventure tale of a band of rabbits, full of twists and surprises. The major theme is how societies can fail individuals because of inequity.



Wine, Women & the Word

Women, Wine and the Word will meet on Feb. 4 at the home of Judy Nuehring at 7 pm. We will be discussing "I Am Free" on pg. 31. All are welcome. Any questions or if you are interested in joining us, contact Judy.

Hands & Feet

Hands and Feet will be open Feb. 2 from 2-4 pm. Items we are always in need of are napkins, toilet paper, paper towels and tissues. Thank you in advance for your support!

Under 105

The next Under 105 Luncheon is Thursday, February 20th. We gather at 11:30 in the Cafe. The lunch buffet begins at noon. The menu is as follows: Soup to warm our souls, assorted salads, french bread, cookies, cakes, and candy.

Wayne LaChance has worked with Kiwanis for many years and is going to share stories from his vast experience. Come join the fun on February 20th!!! R.S.V.P. By Sunday, February 16th, to Merry Freedlund. We look forward to seeing you.

...and More!

Exodus World Service Refugee Update

A Ukrainian family now has a comfortable place they can call home, thanks in large part to St. Paul. On Jan. 16, a team from the church, along with our Exodus representative, delivered household supplies we collected to their apartment. We had a nice visit with the family and got to know them a bit. They were excited and grateful. Thank you so much for helping make them feel welcome here!



December Numbers

Giving: \$59,858 (including online: \$25,123)

Expenses: \$56,967

YTD Giving vs. Expenses: \$57,084

Other Statistics

Date	Attendance	Viewers
12/1	122	56
12/8	156	43
12/15	230	98
12/22	202	43
12/24 3pm	125	N/A
12/24 5pm	172	38
12/24 11pm	49	N/A
12/25	50	48
12/29	77	36

Thank You...

The volunteers and clients of Hands and Feet would like to thank the Sunday School youth of St. Paul for the very generous donation of winter accessories. Enough hats, mittens and scarves were donated that everyone who visited us in January was able to choose an item.

We are continually blessed by the people of St. Paul and thank you for your continued support of this ministry.



Save the Date!

Beer & Hymns Meets in March

Our next Beer & Hymns will be on Friday, March 28th from 7 - 8 pm. Mark your calendar and plan to attend! We meet in the "back room" at Manny's Ale House - 683 St. Charles Rd., Elmhurst. Bring a friend or two. Come early if you'd like to order dinner - in the main restaurant OR in the back room.

St. Paul Lutheran Villa Park and First Church of Lombard co-host this event -- spread the word and bring your friends!

All Things Family Ministry

Middle School Confirmation Retreat January 17-19

The middle school confirmation retreat was held this year at Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center (LOMC) in Oregon, IL. It was a packed weekend with 11 boys & 3 adults participating. The weather cooperated and we enjoyed 2 staff-led activities on Saturday. We took a guided hike through the LOMC campus and participated in a team-building activity. We prepared our meals together and had some good conversation around the fire. Thanks to Ron Skoglund and Ingrida Urbonas for driving both ways and Pastor Zak for joining in the fun from Friday to Saturday afternoon. We had such a good time it will be an annual event.



The group relaxing in the common room and visiting the statue of Black Hawk.



Sunday School Update

Sunday School meets downstairs on Sunday mornings at 9am. Children ages Pre-K to 5th grade are welcome to join in the fun. Questions? Contact [Laura Albert](#).

Did You Know...

It's never too late to join the Wings! Wings Choir is open to all children in Grades K-8. Rehearsals are held on Wednesday afternoons from 4:45-5:30 p.m.. Wings members are encouraged to invite a friend—all are welcome! For more information, please contact Ms. Margaret at margaret@stpaulvp.org or 630-253-9691.

Worship & Prayers



Looking Toward Lent

As we look toward the season of Lent it is important to know what is happening in the life of the church. Listed below are the services, events, and activities available for anyone who is interested in participating:

- Ash Wednesday is March 5th. We will gather for worship services at Noon and 7pm.
- Ashes-to-Go will be offered by Pastor Zak and Vicar Nicholas outside of Door #2 from 7:00am-9:30am on March 5th.
- Weekly Soup Suppers will take place on Wednesdays during Lent starting March 12th. Dinner goes from 5:30pm-6:15pm in the Cafe. Soup suppers will take the place of the regularly scheduled Wednesday night dinners during Lent.
- Holden Evening Prayer will be held in the sanctuary every Wednesday at 6:15pm beginning March 12th. This brief worship service will provide space for song, silence and reflection.
- Lenten devotionals will be emailed daily to those who wish to participate. If you are not receiving the weekly e-letter but would like to receive the weekly devotional, please contact Alice in the church office. A reminder that if you are writing a devotional, it is due to Marti Seaton by February 9th.

Please feel free to contact the office with any questions about the services, events, and activities during Lent.

Prayer List

Names will remain on the prayer list for three weeks, or longer by request. To submit a prayer request please use the online [Prayer Request form](#), email prayers@stpaulvp.org, or contact the church office.

Prayers of Healing and God's Presence

George Kikta (brother of Pauline Ares), Sharon Thacker (mother of Cindi Thacker), Jeanne Kowalski (daughter of Molly Bartel), Jennifer Serna (daughter of Deborah Flesch), George Alajoki, Carole Batek, Sheila Bowdish, Melinda Brent, Paige Cady (friend of Carrie Lavorini), Chris (Elm Tree employee), Kristy Fash-Alvarez (daughter of Teri Fash), Michael Glabicki (son-in-law of John & Carol Freidheim), Margaret Golden, Evelyn Kimble, Wayne Kossow, Beverly Parks, Janice Peacock (friend of Carol & John Freidheim), Cal Root (father of Kevin Simberg & Keith Root), Daniel Rubalcaba, Kelsey Schneider (granddaughter of Molly Bartel), Steve Simberg (brother of Carol Simberg), Jim Thacker (brother of Cindi Thacker), Anita Zielske, and All Caregivers.

Prayers for the Bereaved

Family and friends of Earl Gerhard, Arlene Jensen, Robbie Welsh, Sherri Cozzi (friend of Jude Sansone), Ruth Sear, Andrea Dauksas (friend of Carol Freidheim)

Community



Elm Tree News

Elm Tree hit the ground running and jumped right back into lessons this January! Although there has not been much snow this winter, we took advantage of the milder winter weather earlier this month and explored the snow we did have! It was short lived as the following week consisted of polar temperatures- brrrr! The Preschool class did a study on snow and created several different types of snowman projects.

Pre-K has been studying the solar system, and learning about all things space.

As a center, we are preparing to be observed to obtain a quality rating through Excelerate in the Spring. We have been preparing our classrooms for observation and are part of a quality improvement grant that helps us to prepare. Part of this grant means we were able to purchase some new materials for our classrooms. The kiddos have been enjoying the new items we have been slowly rolling out in the classrooms. One of the items we purchased is a bird feeder that records the wildlife that visits it, so stay tuned to see what kind of visitors stop by the bird feeder!

Last but not least, we wanted to share that our “adopted” cow Vada is getting big! At 3 months old she is already 248 pounds! She has also grown 4 inches in the last month. Stay warm!

Peace, love, and many blessings,
Ms. Maggy and the Elm Tree Staff




3 Month Update

Vada

3-Month Height:
42 inches

3-Month Weight:
248 pounds



She grew 4 inches

*New calf photos come with the 4-month update

February 2025

All events subject to change. [View the calendar at www.spaulvp.org](http://www.spaulvp.org) for more information and Zoom links, or contact the church office.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday 1
2 8a Worship 9a Sunday School 9a Someone You Know 9a Wired Word 10a Worship 2p Hands & Feet	3 10a Prayers & Squares 7p Book Club 7p Espresso Yourself	4 7p M.E.N.D. 7p Wine, Women & Word	5 9:30a Bible Study 4:45p Wings Choir 5:30p Wed Dinner 5:30p Confirmation 6p Handbells 7p Chancel Choir	6	7	8
9 8a Worship 9a Sunday School 9a Someone You Know 9a Wired Word 10a Worship 11a Youth Comm.	10 7p Espresso Yourself	11 2p Rachel Circle	12 9:30a Bible Study 4:45p Wings Choir 5:30p Wed Dinner 5:30p Confirmation 6p Handbells 7p Chancel Choir 8p VPYB Meeting	13	14 10a Elm Tree Valentines Party 1:30p Prayer Vigil Mtg.	15 9a VPYB Uniform Fitting
16 8a Worship 9a Sunday School 9a Someone You Know 9a Wired Word 10a Worship 11a 2nd Vote Mtg.	17 President's Day 11a Beacon Hill Worship 6:30p Elm Tree Board Mtg. 7p Espresso Yourself	18 7p Council Mtg.	19 9:30a Bible Study 1p Under 105 Setup 4:45p Wings Choir 5:30p Wed Dinner 5:30p Confirmation 6p Handbells 7p Chancel Choir	20 Living Waters Due 11:30a Under 105 Luncheon	21	22 9a VPYB Mtg.
23 8a Worship 9a Sunday School 9a Someone You Know 9a Wired Word 10a Worship	24 Timesheets Due	25	26 9:30a Bible Study 4:45p Wings Choir 5:30p Wed Dinner 5:30p Confirmation 6p Handbells 7p Chancel Choir	27	28	



545 S. Ardmore Ave. Villa Park, IL 60181
630-832-5580 | www.stpaulvp.org

Loved by God, we grow, care, give, and share in Jesus' name.

St. Paul Leadership

Church Council

President, Dan Pedersen
Vice President, Doreen Fritz
Secretary, Vacant
Treasurer, Kathleen Murphy

Representatives

Community Engagement, Marti Seaton
Faith Formation, Julie Frakes
Property, Dave Bard
Stewardship, Kristen Rosenwinkel
Worship Music and Arts, Carol Freidheim
Youth, Lisa Speidel and Ginger Riccio

Staff

Pastor: Rev. Zachary Wagner
Vicar: Nicholas Breining
Parish Administrator: Elizabeth Chitester
Administrative & Computer Specialist: Alice Ramsay
Director of Music: Cynthia Viise
Assistant Director of Music: Margaret Colletti
Coordinator of Youth & Family: Roxanne Doremus
Coordinator of Sunday School: Laura Albert
Social Media/ Wedding Coordinator: Katie Briseno
Worship AV Techs:
Fiona Kordyban, Tony Clavio, Keith Root
Nursery Attendant: Nina Matthis

St. Paul Lutheran Church is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and a Reconciling in Christ community.



Stay Connected

Phone: 630-832-5580

Email: office@stpaulvp.org

Website: www.stpaulvp.org

Sign up for our email list to receive the latest news and information from St. Paul!



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.