



December 24, 2021 Christmas Eve

Mailing/Offices: 103 E. Cedar Street, Anamosa IA 52205

Website: www.stpaulanamosa.com

Fax: (319) 462-4843



Step 2: Pam & Ken Humpal taking the 23 nativity pieces to their basement to sand, prime, and paint



Step 3: The final display set up by Tom, Doug and Colin (See Step 1 in last week's Pulse)

A beautiful new outdoor nativity set has been created for us. We are so appreciative of the hard work and countless hours that went into this project.

We wish to acknowledge the following people for their dedication to this project:

- Banowetz Lumber for their generous donation of plywood
- Colin Stiffer for his craftsmanship in cutting all of the pieces
- Pam Humpal, with assistance from Carol Stiffler, in beautifully painting the set
- Colin Stiffler, Doug Fairbanks, and Tom Sabotta for providing the materials and labor for erecting the nativity set.

The nativity set will be used for many years to come. It is a reminder to all that the St. Paul community awaits and celebrates the birth of the Christ child.

Peaceful day to all of you!

For Announcement: We will have one in-person service on Dec. 26 at 9:00 a.m. in the contemporary style to celebrate Jesus' Holy Family. The Bishop's sermon will be used. We will have one in-person service, 9:00 a.m. on Jan. 2, Traditional style, to celebrate Epiphany. On Jan. 9, we will return back to our 8:30/10:30 schedule to recognize the Baptism of Jesus.

Wed. Jan. 29 will be Epiphany. Jan. 5 will be Baptism of Jesus.



Thank you to all who
provided poinsettias to
decorate the sanctuary this
Christmas.
Poinsettias have been
given by:



Paulson's in memory of Jim Speed
Paulson's in honor of Ken & Kathy Neal
Del & Marlene Prout in memory of Pete Gomert
Donna and DJ Condry in memory of Darel Secrist
Darrel Geltz in memory of Beverly Geltz
Darrel Geltz in memory of Dorthy Geltz
Abe Tubbs and Nikki Claussen family in memory of Donna Claussen
Angie Keller in memory of Eddie Keller
Jason & Shelly in memory of Beverly Geltz
Gary & Vickie Behnke in memory of Walt Behnke & Leo Fall, Jr.
Fred and Lindsey Austin in memory of Lee & Darlene Austin and Dennis Weers
Virginia Danielson in memory of beloved family who have gone on before
Tom Sabotta in memory of Marilyn Sabotta
Sherri Evans in memory of Irene Konecny
Janice Koppenhaver in honor of the Koppenhaver and Gerst Families
Kristi Fortune in memory of Ray and Bonny Fortune
Laura Secrist in memory of Darel Secrist
Annette Wheeler in memory of Sandi Thurm
Brian, Michele, Grace & Grant Lubben in memory of Ed Lubben
Jane Ortgies
Steve and Kathy Dornbusch in memory of their parents
Serge and Paula Sisler in honor of our family
Marilyn and Dan Lambertsen in honor of the gift of family
Verna Lewison in memory of Paul Lewison
Phyllis Kula in memory of Philbert & Patsy Hardersen

CHRISTMAS 2021 from Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton

This is our second pandemic Christmas. We thought this would be over so long ago. And still, we wear masks; we're physically distant; we can't be with friends and family as we used to do. And also, there's so much that's broken in this world, so much that tells us, "Why have hope? Just give up."

But we have a hope that's stronger than any of this, stronger even than death. The hope of God comes in the form of a tiny baby, a helpless child; nevertheless, who grew to a man and in his fragile strength was willing to die on the cross and was raised again.

I don't know what next Christmas will bring. I don't know what New Year's will bring. But I do know we have hope.

St. Paul put it this way: ***"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."***

Merry Christmas, dear church.

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton

Presiding Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church
in America



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

Thank you to Nancy Douglas and Steve Dornbusch for giving us the "State of the Congregation" last weekend. Here are the financials for your review. The Council minutes will be published at a later date.

Balances of St. Paul Bank Accounts as of 11/30/2021:

CHECKING
General Fund Checking Acct.
Beginning Balance \$42,292.11
Ending Balance \$41,786.24
Land Maint & Repair Checking Acct.
Beginning Balance \$55,612.96
Ending Balance \$ 59,532.96
Memorial Trust Checking Account
Beginning Balance \$7,495.11
Ending Balance \$7,540.11
Memorial Money Market Account
Beginning Balance \$15,125.18
Ending Balance \$15,127.71
SAVINGS
Land Development Savings Acct.
Beginning Balance \$36,905.21
Ending Balance \$36,908.34

November 2021 Financial Synopsis

As of first quarter of FY22: Giving is \$29.5 K under anticipated budget of \$74.4K. November Giving is \$19.9K, \$5.0K below November Budget of \$24.9K. Year to Date Giving is \$78.8K to YTD Budget of \$124.2K. Giving is 40.0% below budget to date.

Anticipated Expenses are as budgeted with some categories under and some over the budgeted mark. Note that Expenses are level loaded.

I've attached the detail of the performance. (page 7)

If you have any questions, please call me at 319-551-3358 or email at njldouglas@hotmail.com. Blessings, Nancy Douglas



Please Pray for the Following

(Why people want prayers isn't important, *the prayers are!*)

For Linda Vonbehren, Leslie Swartzee, Vicki Schuman, Jonathan

Schuman, Joyce Wendt, and for the families of Marilyn Sabotta and Wilma Cox.

Continued prayers for the victims of/and families displaced by the recent storms.

To add a name call or email Lois at 462-4841/ stpaulanamosa@gmail.com. Names will be listed for 4 weeks and may be renewed.

GriefShare meets Tuesday evenings at 6:00 pm in the lower level of the CE building. If you would like to attend please call Nancy Douglas for details at 319-551-3358.

AA meets in the lower level of the CE building on Tuesday evenings at 7:00 pm.

Jones County Food Bank: Items needed this week: canned vegetables, canned fruits, beef stew, Mac & Cheese and personal care items. **Please place items in the Advent Giving area at the back of the church OR call the Food Bank to make your own arrangements (462-4343)**

Thank You, Thank You, Thank You!

On behalf of the Stewardship Committee, thank you for accepting the invitation to The Thankfulope 50 envelope campaign. The total raised from the envelope campaign was \$2005.

The St Paul Council has allocated the funds as \$500 to ALY, \$500 to the Anamosa Ministerial Association and the rest to the general account to assist with fulfillment of our Mission Statement.

The St Paul community is truly thankful, grateful and blessed. God bless you all this holiday season.

St Paul Stewardship Committee
Heart At Work

Introduction: As on the first day of creation, on this Christmas Day the Word illumines the world, shining forth to bring all things into being. Today we celebrate the incarnate Word, God becoming flesh to live among us in the person of Jesus Christ then and now. Emboldened by the good news of Christ's birth, along with the shepherds, Mary and Joseph, and all witnesses to the light of Christ, we declare to the world that we have indeed seen and been transformed by the arrival of "the salvation of our God." O come, let us adore!

Welcome

First Reading: The Book of the Hebrew Prophet Isaiah 62: 6-12 **The Message**

Isaiah proclaims the good news that God so loved Jerusalem, the symbol and spiritual homeland of the Chosen People, He has once again made her the light to all nations. Zion is the more ancient name for the City of Peace, Jerusalem. Most of Her inhabitants had been taken into exile by the Babylonians (before 586 BCE) or scattered throughout the known lands (from Rome to Asia to Africa), and while they were away, large portions of Jerusalem laid in ruins. Her Temple had been destroyed and the beauty of the city despoiled. To counteract the despair that came with such knowledge, Isaiah spoke of a time when the city would once again be resplendent with God's glory. Jerusalem was YHWH God's dwelling place; she was God's "spouse." The feelings associated with this image for the Jewish people would have included warmth and security from being cared and provided for after the period in exile when neighboring people were calling them "forsaken by their God" and "desolate in God's absence." What seemed like abandonment would soon be turned into rejoicing because all people (including the Gentiles) will come to realize that Jerusalem and all who worship within her walls are truly God's beloved people. They will be lifted from their low, powerless, dishonorable positions in society to a place near the royal throne, the place of greatest influence, power, and honor. Remain loyal, for God's "hour" will happen in God's city of peace with all who believe in Him. Christmas is about proclaiming God's closeness to the human family in the face of the human tendency to see ruin and scarcity.

Second Reading: St. Paul's letter to Bishop Titus 3:4-7 **The Message**

God is the great gift giver; to forget this is to risk creating idols. In this passage, St. Paul writes to Titus, who like Timothy served as a "bishop or overseer" in one of the early Christian communities, apparently on the Mediterranean island of Crete. Titus is reminded of the truth to which he must hold if he is going to successfully protect the members of his fledgling Christian community from the false teachers and distractions of the world around them. Greek philosophers and leaders of various religious traditions were constantly corrupting the Christian message to make the believers look like disobedient threats to the state, cannibals, or idiots. But with Paul's urging, Titus proclaims again and again that the members of the Christian community have already received the grace of God through their faith and baptism, and by emulating Jesus the Christ, they can endure these hardships and experience the goodness God has promised.

The choice of this reading for this feast once again shows us the need to keep Christ at the heart of our celebration. All that we do must flow from the realization that God is present to us and desires that we be real. As Christians, we are given moral imperatives to help us live with integrity and be God’s witnesses in the world. In this sense, we are “Word made flesh.” It is particularly important that we reject the worldly desire for greater personal wealth at the expense of others, gluttony, and acting with a lack of respect, lest we become like those who do not know God, or worse yet, have forgotten God. We do this not to win God’s reward or approval but because God has already moved towards us, becoming our neighbor and dwelling with us.

Gospel: Luke 2:1-20 The Message

Prepare to hear the beginning of the story which explains the changing of earth’s history. In a real time and in a real place, a baby wrapped in simple garments and sleeping in an animal’s food trough began a life in abject poverty; a life that would alter human existence. Perhaps right now you are able to enjoy the quiet of this night in the glow of candlelight, or perhaps you are presently surrounded by a lot of activity and the voices of little ones. Either way, you are sitting amidst those we call “brothers and sisters in faith,” and we take time to reflect on the humble beginnings of God’s own Son. We recall that in Luke’s story no one attended Jesus’ birth aside from two modest yet loving parents and some animals. The event seems hardly worth mentioning until....

In a nearby field, probably by the village of *Beit Sahur* {which in Arabic means, “Home of those who stay up all night talking”} sat the poorest of the poor, the lowest of the low, the despised and illiterate shepherds. To these the angel announced the birth of God’s anointed one (Messiah/Christ). It was not to the rich or the powerful or even the religious leaders that this good news was first revealed. The first visitors to the Lord’s resting place were unassuming guardians of sheep. In eagerness and filled with joy they visit the child. As they make their way to the manger on foot (probably about a mile), they shared the angels’ announcement with all they met. Those who were told the story were filled with wonder and awe and amazement. Put yourself in their place--it would be like hearing that you received what you longed for deepest in your heart: a cure for cancer, your soldier child returned home, the coach choosing you to start, the college acceptance letter arrives, the war ended....

There is an interesting contrast between Mary’s and the shepherd’s response to the Good News. Mary was not hearing the proclamation of the newborn savior for the first time; Gabriel had previously revealed this to her. But now that the baby is born, we’re told that she “pondered/reflected on the {Good News} in her heart.” She did not join the shepherds in their public proclamation. She remained with her son, as she would until the end at the foot of the cross, pondering the mystery of God’s ways and the unfolding of the Messiah’s life. Already on that first morning, Mary must have been wondering what it was going to be like to be the mother of this special child. Would he be exceptionally smart, have a compassionate heart, be a whiz with the hammer and lathe? Would he be in the Sanhedrin one day? Would he always be happy or incredibly demanding or colicky? Perhaps he would sleep through the night right away.... We can imagine some of the many thoughts that must have passed through the minds of Jesus’ parents that first day. The only thing they knew for sure is that they had the same

Taped services are found on St. Paul website, St. Paul YouTube page or St. Paul Facebook page.

NOTICE—

one service on Dec 26th & Jan 2

December 26th 9:00 A.M.

- * Communion prep - Ed & Susan
- * Greeters - Ed & Susan
- * Reader - Ralph Andresen
- * PowerPoint - Linda or Samuel Kenny

Tuesday, December 28

- * 1:30pm Scripture study (in person CE bldg.)
- * 6:00pm Grief Support—LL CE building
- * 7:00pm AA—LL CE building

Wednesday, December 29

- * **6:00pm Worship**
Greeter: Darla Algoe
Reader & Prayers: Darla Algoe
PowerPoint: Myra Powell
- * **NO WD4**

January 2nd 9:00 A.M.

- * Communion Prep - Jeff & Barb Switzer
- * Greeters - Tom & Sherri
- * Reader - Shaun or Valerie Lambertsen
- * Prayers - Shaun or Valerie Lambertsen
- * PowerPoint - Lambertsen boys



Office Hours

Monday	9:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.
Tuesday	8:30 a.m.—1:30 p.m.
Wednesday	9:00 a.m.— 2:00 p.m
Thursday	9:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.
Friday	Office Closed

responsibility every parent in history has had, to bring their child up in the ways of God. Because we have no record of Jesus' childhood, we are invited to imagine the personality and behavior of every child ever born expressed in the person of Jesus. Childhood is indeed holy.

For Luke and his community, Jesus was savior, Christ, and Lord (2:11). In their minds, Jesus ushered in the time of salvation for the whole world. He came to remind us what God had intended for us from the beginning: life, peace, abundance, unity, and order. Jesus will bring deliverance from evil, illness, and the division caused by sin. He will heal the alienation that separates people from God and from one another. See how it is already happening in this Christmas experience!

Taking It Home:

- Three people will bring you words of wisdom today. Be aware and ready to accept them.
- If there was one thing you could change about this Christmas, what would it be? Share this with someone you trust.
- Tell someone about a special childhood memory.
- Make a commitment to give thanks to God with your parish family each Sunday this coming month.
- Where has God created a space of safety and "home" for you?
- Describe your thoughts and feelings as you observe the sunrise or sunset. What do they speak to you of God?

Mindfulness (set aside three minutes. Breathe. Read slowly three times. Which words or ideas hold energy for you? What images emerge in you?)

"The problem is solved. Now go and utterly enjoy all remaining days. Not only is it "Always Advent," but every day can now be Christmas because the one we thought we were just waiting for has come once and for all." — **Richard Rohr, Preparing for Christmas: Daily Meditations for Advent**

"The significance of Jesus' wounded body is his deliberate and conscious holding of the pain of the world and refusing to send it elsewhere. The wounds were not necessary to convince God that we were loveable; the wounds are to convince us of the path and price of transformation. They are what will happen to you if you face and hold sin in compassion instead of projecting it in hatred."

— **Richard Rohr, A Lever and a Place to Stand: The Contemplative Stance, the Active Prayer**

Reverencing the Incarnate: Tradition holds that an individual's dignity is best protected when the dignity of everyone in the community is respected. Become a champion for human rights and dignity out of love for God. Only when the dignity and rights and responsibilities of everyone are upheld, is true *shalom* possible {*Pacem in Terris*, Pope John XXIII, 1963}.

ENCYCLICAL LETTER *LAUDATO SI'* OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS ON CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME

Given in Rome at Saint Peter's on 24 May, the Solemnity of Pentecost, in the year 2015, the third of my Pontificate.

CHAPTER ONE: WHAT IS HAPPENING TO OUR COMMON HOME

VI. WEAK RESPONSES

53. These situations have caused sister earth, along with all the abandoned of our world, to cry out, pleading that we take another course. Never have we so hurt and mistreated our common home as we have in the last two hundred years. Yet we are called to be instruments of God our Father, so that our planet might be what he desired when he created it and correspond with his plan for peace, beauty and fullness. The problem is that we still lack the culture needed to confront this crisis. We lack leadership capable of striking out on new paths and meeting the needs of the present with concern for all and without prejudice towards coming generations. The establishment of a legal framework which can set clear boundaries and ensure the protection of ecosystems has become indispensable; otherwise, the new power structures based on the techno-economic paradigm may overwhelm not only our politics but also freedom and justice.

54. It is remarkable how weak international political responses have been. The failure of global summits on the environment make it plain that our politics are subject to technology and finance. There are too many special interests, and economic interests easily end up trumping the common good and manipulating information so that their own plans will not be affected. The *Aparecida Document* urges that "the interests of economic groups which irrationally demolish sources of life should not prevail in dealing with natural resources". The alliance between the economy and technology ends up sidelining anything unrelated to its immediate interests.

Consequently the most one can expect is superficial rhetoric, sporadic acts of philanthropy and perfunctory expressions of concern for the environment, whereas any genuine attempt by groups within society to introduce change is viewed as a nuisance based on romantic illusions or an obstacle to be circumvented.

55. Some countries are gradually making significant progress, developing more effective controls and working to combat corruption. People may well have a growing ecological sensitivity but it has not succeeded in changing their harmful habits of consumption which, rather than decreasing, appear to be growing all the more. A simple example is the increasing use and power of air-conditioning. The markets, which immediately benefit from sales, stimulate ever greater demand. An outsider looking at our world would be amazed at such behavior, which at times appears self-destructive.

Response to *Laudato Si'*: What words or phrases leave an impression on you? Are you compelled to change your behavior or thinking because of it?

Financials continued from page 3

Accounts	Actual Jul 01, 2021 - Jun 30, 2022	Budget Jul 01, 2021 - Jun 30, 2022	Budget Remaining Jul 01, 2021 - Jun 30, 2022	% to Total
Revenues				
Operating Contributions				
4000 Regular Weekly Contributions	\$83,628.68	\$298,098.52	\$214,469.84	38.99%
4001 Interest - Undesignated	\$19.56	\$0.00	-\$19.56	
4002 Other Misc Income	\$11,573.00	\$0.00	-\$11,573.00	
4003 Fees/Use of the Church	\$149.00	\$0.00	-\$149.00	
Total Operating Contributions	\$95,370.24	\$298,098.52	\$202,728.28	
Designated Income				
4914 Property Development Income	\$28.00	\$0.00	-\$28.00	
4932 Youth Mission Trip Income	\$1,255.00	\$0.00	-\$1,255.00	
Total Designated Income	\$1,283.00	\$0.00	-\$1,283.00	
Other Account Income				
4935 Memorial Fund Income	\$2,045.00	\$0.00	-\$2,045.00	
4937 Vanguard Wellesley Income	\$57.36	\$0.00	-\$57.36	
4938 Vanguard Wellington Income	-\$1,639.16	\$0.00	\$1,639.16	
4939 Money Market Memorial Income	\$299.93	\$0.00	-\$299.93	
4943 Land Maintenance Income	\$23,520.00	\$0.00	-\$23,520.00	
4952 Memorial Money Market ckg	\$17.81	\$0.00	-\$17.81	
Total Other Account Income	\$24,300.94	\$0.00	-\$24,300.94	
Total Revenues	\$120,954.18	\$298,098.52	\$177,144.34	
Expenses				
Total Salaries & Benefits	\$80,926.70	\$201,036.75	\$120,110.05	67.38%
Total Benevolence	\$10,268.27	\$23,001.77	\$12,733.50	80.64%
Total Adult Formation	\$1,240.25	\$2,900.00	\$1,659.75	74.73%
Total Family & Youth Formation	\$4,468.91	\$11,260.00	\$6,791.09	65.81%
Total Worship	\$1,718.49	\$5,650.00	\$3,931.51	43.71%
Total Insurance	\$11,520.00	\$10,000.00	-\$1,520.00	757.89%
5721 Gas	\$568.54	\$4,200.00	\$3,631.46	15.66%
5722 Electricity	\$2,603.55	\$6,800.00	\$4,196.45	62.04%
5723 Water	\$591.58	\$1,500.00	\$908.42	65.12%
5724 Phone/Internet	\$2,145.46	\$4,200.00	\$2,054.54	104.43%
Total Utilities	\$5,909.13	\$16,700.00	\$10,790.87	54.76%
Total Yard & Parking Clearance	\$89.88	\$4,300.00	\$4,210.12	2.13%
Total Repair & Maintenance GMT	\$1,748.11	\$7,500.00	\$5,751.89	30.39%
Total Gifts & Advertising	\$600.00	\$1,300.00	\$700.00	85.71%
Total Administrative Office	\$7,122.71	\$14,450.00	\$7,327.29	97.21%
Designated Expenses				
5932 Mission Youth Trip Expense	\$3,367.77	\$0.00	-\$3,367.77	
5935 Memorial Funds Expense	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	-\$2,000.00	
5943 Land Maintenance Expense	\$3,815.80	\$0.00	-\$3,815.80	
Total Designated Expenses	\$9,183.57	\$0.00	-\$9,183.57	
Total Expenses	\$134,796.02	\$298,098.52	\$163,302.50	
Net Total	-\$13,841.84	\$0.00	\$13,841.84	

Mailing Address:

**St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church
103 East Cedar Street
Anamosa, IA 52205**

Return Service Requested



Wednesday, December 29th

Time: 7pm-11pm

(Immediately following Worship)



Calling All 7th , 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th & 12th grade students! You have been requesting a Lock-In and we have answered that request!! Come experience St. Paul like you have never before! We will turn the Church building into an escape room, Enjoy the gym at the LCC, Have Pizza, Snacks, Drinks, Games, Fellowship and more! All youth that are interested must have a completed Release Form filled out by parents including any visitors. Please contact Kaileen for one.

Please RSVP by: Monday, December 27th @ 2pm.

Kaileen Weaver cell # 951-553-5728
office # 319-462-4841