



Newsletter

Volume 24 Issue 10
November 14, 2019

The Irreducibly Diverse Nature of Ministry

In the 90's there were these books that were sweeping the nation's middle schools called The Magic Eye. At a glance, they just looked like nonsense—a mish-mash of color and shapes. But when you stuck your nose up to the page, crossed and unfocused your eyes, and slowly pulled back the book... voila! an image would appear from the chaos. But you can't focus your eyes or the whole thing fizzles into nothingness.

Unfortunately, I was never able to see one of these images. I still can't. All I ever managed to do was give myself a headache and make my eyeballs hurt. All around me, classmates were oohing and aahing, saying, "Hey! It's a fish! This one's a boat!" And there I sat, like some poor kid whose parents didn't let him trick-or-treat, like some loser who was allergic to everything and got picked last for kickball. "Hey Dennis, do you see it? Do you see it?" Once in a while I'd fake it and say, "Oh yeah! Cool!" But I never saw the image. I tried again this morning and decided the whole thing is a hoax. Either that or my eyesight is so perfect that I can't possibly be unfocused enough to see it. Yeah, that's it. One of those.

The longer I am a pastor the more I believe that the ministry is like these Magic Eye pictures. By ministry I mean more than just the Divine Worship and the means of grace; I mean the entirety of interactions that Christians have with Christ, with each other, and with the world. For the local gathering of Christians in a particular congregation, the whole of their lives and interactions is undefinably rich and confusing. Somewhere hidden in there is the image of Christ. Somewhere hidden in those colors is the unity of His body fleshed out in the lives of the saints. But as soon as you focus on one specific part, you lose the whole image. Oh, it's there alright, but it's only a part of the whole. The entire image cannot be reduced to the sum of its parts.

I'm old enough to remember a world view wherein the church trained its pastors to systematize and compartmentalize portions of the ministry in strategic ways with the universal goal of growing the church. My impression of such "strategic planning" has grown increasingly stale as I perceive this view treating the ministry like a business, with the pastor functioning as a CEO who passes out mandates from on high. At best, the program fails and the CEO is blamed for the loss. At worst, the saints perceive the strategies as a new law and their identity in Jesus Christ is buried under the rubble of we-tried-thats and we-used-tos. This "purpose driven" stuff is still around (train this group this way; send these people to this retreat; organize the boards in that method); but there is an

Inside this issue:

- Thanksgiving Services 2
- LWML Friendship Circle 3
- Ladies Aid / Book Fair / Auction Save the Date 4
- PTO Holly Jolly Christmas Store / J. Wilson Concert 5
- Advent by Candlelight 6
- Persecuted Church 7
- Join the Journey 8
- December Rotations 9
- December Calendar 10

SAVED
by Jesus,
SENT
to serve.

Continued on page 2...

The Irreducibly Diverse Nature of Ministry

Continued from page 1

increasing number of pastors who scoff as I do at these fly-by-night strategies. Besides, if there is a silver bullet for church growth, why haven't we found it in almost 2000 years of ministry?

You can't find it because your eyes are too focused.

The body of Christ is irreducibly diverse—thus, so is the ministry. The lives of all the faithful differ in as many ways as there are people and experiences. The bigger the congregation, the more diverse the ministry. Ask a young man why he wants to date a particular girl and he'll tell you the answer—you can probably guess it. But ask a husband of sixty years why he loves his wife and he'll stare dumbly at you. There are too many reasons, too many experiences. There is so much wrapped up in that question, so much to speak of that our eyes cloud and our heads ache trying to find the answer.

So too the ministry. There are things happening that you would never even consider (but nevertheless are) "ministry". For every church potluck there's a break-room conversation about church. For every hymn sung there's a lullaby to an infant before bed. For every funeral there's a phone call sharing the grief. For every youth gathering there's an unspoken question answered that builds faith. For every welcome packet there's a smile that changes an outlook. For every retreat there's a kitchen-table devotional in the quiet morning light. You get the picture, even if you can't see it. Every speck makes up the greater image, and only by looking beyond the separate can you imagine the whole.

That's what the Ministry Center is all about. We aren't spending \$3+ million just because the road is busy (on Sunday mornings it isn't busy at all). We aren't building a new kitchen just to make funeral lunches (last year funerals were less than 5% of the kitchen usage). We aren't installing classrooms just because there isn't enough Sunday School space, or a second door to the women's restroom just for brides to prepare. We are stepping out in faith, spending the money, building the Ministry Center because of the road and funerals and the handicapped and youth and children and Sunday School and weddings and Bible Studies and support groups and worship and family events and fellowship and whatever else you can think of. It's everything we're doing now, and everything we could be and will be doing in the future. By we I mean us, meaning you and me and you again; no mandates from on high, no "this is now our identity", but real people with real interests, gifts, and passions, all making up a diversity of ministry whose only limit is the sky. Our identity is in Christ, and we are His body. We can no sooner privilege a hand because it isn't a foot than we can privilege any single ministry in the church.

Do you see the image?

—Pastor



LWML - Friendship Circle

It's November! It's usually a pretty predictable month, even weather-wise. Usually, the last of the leaves are falling, flower and veggie gardens or pots are put to rest, lawnmowers winterized, and snow blowers tuned up. We hang the hoe and locate the snow shovel.

But there's more...

We anticipate heartwarming and cozy Thanksgiving services and family gatherings; and conversations at such, brim with December's advent to Christmas!

But there's more...

The LWML Friendship Circle annual fundraiser Auction! It is held on the 3rd Thursday of this month: November 21, 6 p.m. in the St. Paul auditorium.

Yes! For a while we have planned, baked, and crafted to donate to this special event. There will be homemade goodies and 'beverages' from our own kitchens or craft rooms, various décor items and even surprise bags! It's an evening of high energy and laughs, even for the spectator. Pastor Matyas and John Schlicker will handle the bidders as Auctioneers.

With grateful hearts, the success of this event will bless St. Paul with Portals of Prayer and LWML Quarterly magazines and give us opportunities to show acts of Christian love and kindness to fellow St. Paul members. Also, we will give mission support in our area, around the state and country!

Beyond our St. Paul events...

The Michigan District LWML

Goals for 2018-2020 are focused on:

- **Spiritual Growth:** Women of all ages in the MI District are energized by individual and group Bible study as they learn to know God, become aware of His grace and mercy through Jesus Christ, their Savior, and trust Him to guide them in their life through the work of the Holy Spirit.
- **Leadership Development:** Women in the MI District, energized by their spiritual growth, begin developing relationships that lead and assist other women in becoming willing leaders.
- **Participation in Mission Opportunities:** In thankfulness of what the Lord has done for them, women in the MI District use their talents and skills to serve those with physical and spiritual needs by participating in mission opportunities both locally and in the world.

So, the mission of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) is to **assist** each woman of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in affirming her relationship with the Triune God so that she is enabled to

use her gifts in ministry to the people of the world.

Where does this start to happen? Right in your own church, St Paul! Our LWML connection at the grass roots level helps us start to uncover and nurture our individual, God given strengths/talents. Then we encourage and support each other to use our talents for God's plan - our mission. And, it's not too soon to think deeply and prayerfully about this: The LWML of the MI District will meet in convention at Ellison Place, Gaylord, Michigan, July 10-12, 2020!

So much information is and will be available through Friendship Circle to attend! Keep up with the event news as it becomes available at the website (lwmlmichigan.org). Find out how YOU can join in the planning and/or attending by coming to our FC meetings! We are co-hosting the Convention and are delegated and honored to help with a few special events!

Each Zone in the LWML is asked to select a young woman (preferably between 21 to 35 years old) to attend this convention as their Young Woman Representative (YWR) at the Zone's expense. (Feb 15, 2020 deadline) Who might qualify? Look around in church, Bible class, at volunteers for VBS, Sunday School and other church events! Help 'fan the flame' of a future YWR at St. Paul! God bless you! Happy Thanksgiving!

2020 Michigan District Convention in Gaylord MI

Fri, Jul 10 - Sun, Jul 12, 2020



Ladies Aid

The November Ladies Aid Meeting was opened with a warm welcome from President Darlene Zeilinger. Melissa Appold led us in devotion entitled "An Attitude of Gratitude." A grateful heart sees each day as a gift. Thankful people focus less on what they lack and more on the privileges they have. We welcomed new members Betty Stieve and Linda Snelenberger.

Bake Sale help is still needed. If you can help out Thursday or Friday, December 5-6, contact Angie Buda (397-4198).

Our Christmas Party is on Monday, December 2 at the Saginaw Valley Public Golf Course (formerly Bay City Country Club). Cocktails start at 5:30 p.m.; dinner will be at 6 p.m. Cost is \$20. Bring your gifts for your secret pal and your beautiful singing voices for Christmas carols. If you haven't signed up yet, please call Ashley Clauss (225-0592) by November 19. Feel free to contact Brenda Weiss or Lisa Stanley if you have questions.

Bay Chapter Wellspring Auxiliary Meeting will be on Monday,

November 18. The meeting will be at the Agency Office (6019 Westside Saginaw Rd.) Refreshments will be served at 7 p.m. with the devotions and meeting beginning at 7:15 p.m. Please remember to bring back your gift cards for the Foster Children's Christmas Party to the meeting. All ladies of the church are welcome to attend the meeting.

We ended the evening making tray cards for Covenant Health dinner trays.

Book Sale Thank You

Thank you for supporting St. Paul's Scholastic Book Fair. We smashed our goal and earned \$1,100 in FREE books for our classrooms and library! Also, generous shoppers donated an additional 40 books to St. Paul from our "Classroom Wish Lists." A special thank you to the volunteers who gave of their time and talents. You helped to make the Book Fair a huge success. - Kristen Glasser

Save the Date!

AUCTION FUNDRAISER

To benefit the Ministry Center

March 22, 2020

4-6 p.m. Supper & Silent Auction
6 p.m. Live Auction

St. Paul Ladies Aid BAKE SALE

Date: Saturday
December 7, 2019

St. Paul
Lutheran School
6094 Westside
Saginaw Rd.
Bay City, MI 48706

Come and Enjoy...

Coffee & Homemade Donuts: 8:30a.m.- 9:30a.m.

Bake Sale: 9:30a.m. - 11:00a.m.

Traditional Homemade German Treats including:
Springerle, Eisenkuechle, Stollen, Butterhorns, Breads,
Cookies, Toffee, Lebkuchen, and Sauerkraut.

Proceeds will benefit St. Paul Lutheran Church & School

Follow us on Facebook @ StPaulLadiesAidBakeSale

Holly Jolly Christmas Store

PTO is sponsoring a Holly Jolly Christmas Store during the school day on Friday, December 13, 2019, in the gym. Students will be given an opportunity to shop for new and gently used items to give as Christmas gifts for their parents and siblings. Gifts will be sent home that day, wrapped, tagged, and ready to be placed under your family's Christmas tree. PTO is looking for donations of new or gently used items for students to purchase to give as Christmas gifts for their parents and siblings. Some ideas of items might include: coffee mugs, candles, home decor, books, toys, art supplies, sports equipment, fun school supplies, jewelry, nail polish, trading cards, etc. Items will be priced between \$1 and \$5. Bring your donations to the school's main hallway. We are collecting now through Tuesday, December 10.



ST. PAUL STUDENTS CAN PURCHASE GIFTS
FOR PARENTS AND SIBLINGS

Holly Jolly Christmas Store

Preview: Dec. 12 (2:15-3:30 PM)

Shopping Day: Dec. 13

**DONATE ITEMS FOR THE STORE
OR VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME!**



.....

del Rey
PROMOTIONS PRESENTS

JOSH WILSON

NOEL TOUR 2019

A UNIQUE CHRISTMAS EXPERIENCE

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2019 - 7PM

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH
6100 Westside Saginaw Road
Bay City, MI 48706

\$10.00 general admission

Online tickets at attendstar.com
FOR MORE INFO CALL 989 662-6050

WITH SPECIAL GUEST **JORDAN ST. CYR**

MORE INFO AT JOSHWILSONMUSIC.COM/TOUR




THE WOMEN OF ST. PAUL LUTHERAN
CHURCH & SCHOOL ARE WARMLY
INVITED TO...

ADVENT BY CANDLELIGHT

Join us for an elegant evening of music, dessert, and fellowship. \$5.00 tickets can be purchased in the office or online. Proceeds to benefit the Ministry Center.



SUNDAY, DEC. 15, 2019 • 7PM

ST. PAUL AUDITORIUM



TICKET DEADLINE: WEDNESDAY, DEC. 11

Interested in hostessing (providing table decor and place settings for 6-8 ladies)? Contact Valerie Matyas (248.227.3491).

Interested in donating a dessert? Contact Megan Kusterer (989.280.3433). Hostesses and dessert contributors will receive a complimentary ticket.



4 Ways to Pray for North Korea or 4 Ways to Pray for _____ (fill in the blank)

Recently Voice of the Martyrs featured a very brief but helpful article titled, "Four Ways to Pray for North Korea." In the past few years the "Hermit Kingdom" has been grabbing news headlines constantly. Rightly so, because this nation is among the most barbarous nations persecuting Christians. Those brothers and sisters in chains truly need our prayers. The guidelines are brief, to the point and not difficult to understand. Sadly, there are many Christians treated in much the same way in the following countries: China, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Syria, Viet Nam, Cambodia, Nigeria, Cuba, Russia, India and the list goes on and on and on. Our prayers encourage so many fellow Christians around the world. Please go into your prayer closet, room or space today and remember all Christians, wherever they are, following the four ways to pray.

World-wide persecution has been the theme of these articles for many years. There is never

lack of material. In fact, much of the information coming to my attention ends up on "the cutting room floor." Sorting through it and making decisions as to what to



cover next is always a major project when I sit before my screen.

And now, to the "Four Ways to Pray for North Korea."

~~~~~  
"Here are four specific ways you can pray for North Korea and for our Christian brothers and sisters there:

1. Praise God for our Christian family in North Korea! Ask the Lord to encourage and strengthen

them through His Word and the Holy Spirit, and to give them creative ways of meeting in secret.

2. Pray that Bibles will be able to enter North Korea undetected by authorities.

3. Pray God will lead front-line workers to North Koreans — both inside and outside their country — whose hearts are ready to receive the seed of the Word, and that new believers will grow to full maturity in Christ.

4. Pray that North Korean workers laboring in other countries will meet Jesus and take the gospel back to their country, resulting in a great harvest for the Kingdom."

(& 5) Pray that God's mercy and grace will be very apparent in each person's life!

Also pray that we will be found worthy of being called "Christian" because it is the highest honor to be called by the name of Christ.

- Anonymous

## Missionaries & Foreign Workers Supported by St. Paul

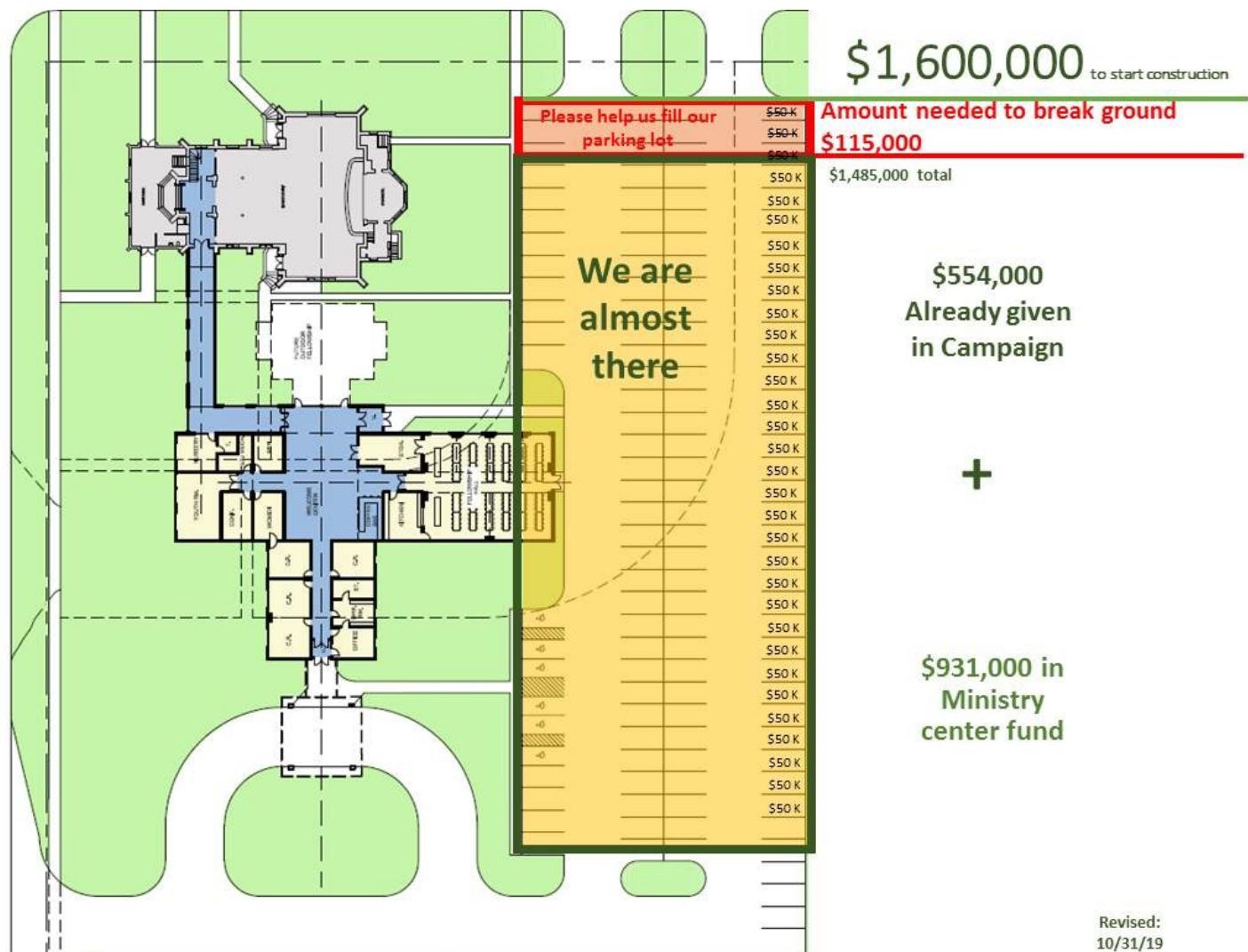
**Matthew, Kali, Laurel, Eleanor, and Caroline Wood** Serving the Lord in Indonesia  
[Click here for their latest blog post.](#)

**James & Christel Neuendorf** Serving the Lord in Puerto Rico  
[Click here for October's Newsletter](#)



## Join the Journey

If you have not started fulfilling your pledges, now is the time! Please continue to encourage your fellow St. Paul members to do the same. Automatic withdrawal is available through the website; contact the office for assistance.



**St. Paul Lutheran  
Church Newsletter**  
November 14, 2019  
Volume 24—Issue 10

6100 Westside Saginaw Road  
Bay City, MI 48706  
Church Phone: 989.686.7140  
School Phone: 989.684.4450

**Pastor:**  
Rev. Dennis Matyas  
**Director of Family Life Ministries:**  
Mr. David Schultz  
**School Principal:**  
Mr. Jack Lustila  
**Secretary:**  
Mrs. Ruth Schian

Newsletter articles for the November newsletter are due on Wednesday, December 11, 2019. You may submit articles to the email address below or drop them off in the office.

Website: [www.stpaulbaycity.org](http://www.stpaulbaycity.org)  
Email: [office@stpaulbaycity.org](mailto:office@stpaulbaycity.org)  
Fax: 989.684.0882

## Acolyte and Reader Schedule for December

**Acolytes:**

|                       |                                                   |                                        |                                      |                                      |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Sun., Dec. 1</b>   | <b>8:00 a.m.</b><br>Sawyer Bebow                  | <b>10:30 a.m.</b><br>Nathan Coyer      | <b>Readers:</b>                      |                                      |
| <b>Wed., Dec. 4</b>   | <b>3:15 p.m.</b><br>Lillian Garcia                | <b>6:30 p.m.</b><br>Hogan Bourdow      | <b>8:00 a.m.</b><br>Scott Engelhardt | <b>10:30 a.m.</b><br>Terry Burkhard  |
| <b>Sun., Dec. 8</b>   | <b>8:00 a.m.</b><br>Deanna Zeilinger              | <b>10:30 a.m.</b><br>Riley Jimenez     | <b>8:00 a.m.</b><br>Jack Lustila     | <b>10:30 a.m.</b><br>Jeremy Warren   |
| <b>Wed., Dec. 11</b>  | <b>Song Service</b><br>( <i>Grades 5-8 Sing</i> ) | <b>6:30 p.m.</b><br>Landon LaForest    |                                      |                                      |
| <b>Sun., Dec. 15</b>  | <b>8:00 a.m.</b><br>Caroline Douponce             | <b>10:30 a.m.</b><br>Lexi Hutchinson   | <b>8:00 a.m.</b><br>Ken Van Cise     | <b>10:30 a.m.</b><br>David Schultz   |
| <b>Wed., Dec. 18</b>  | <b>Christmas Program</b><br>( <i>PS-8th</i> )     | <b>6:30 p.m.</b><br>Hayden Swartz      |                                      |                                      |
| <b>Sun., Dec. 22</b>  | <b>8:00 a.m.</b><br>Blake Lowe                    | <b>10:30 a.m.</b><br>Rachel Mammel     | <b>8:00 a.m.</b><br>Ben Helmreich    | <b>10:30 a.m.</b><br>Howard McMullen |
| <b>Tues., Dec. 24</b> | <b>3:15 p.m.</b><br><i>Christmas Eve</i>          | <b>6:30 p.m.</b><br>Natalie List       | <b>Emily EauClaire</b>               |                                      |
| <b>Wed., Dec. 25</b>  | <b>9:00 a.m.</b><br><i>Christmas Day</i>          |                                        |                                      |                                      |
| <b>Sun., Dec. 29</b>  | <b>8:00 a.m.</b><br>Deanna Zeilinger              | <b>10:30 a.m.</b><br>Brooklynn Garrett | <b>8:00 a.m.</b><br>Paul Begick      | <b>10:30 a.m.</b><br>Roy Schmidt     |
| <b>Tues., Dec. 31</b> |                                                   | <b>6:30 p.m.</b><br>New Year's Eve     | <b>Jake Appold</b>                   |                                      |

## Altar Guild, Elders, and Ushers in December

**Altar Guild:**

Jean Appold  
Margie Begick

**Elders:**

Mike Appold  
Don Krueger  
Roger Hendrick  
Rich Doan

**Ushers** (8:00 a.m. and any evening services during the first half of the month): **Group #3**  
Herb Matthes (684-3109)  
Bob Schlicker  
Jason Schlicker  
Art Zeilinger  
Peter Auernhammer

**Ushers** (10:30 a.m. and any evening services during the last half of the month.): **Group #6**  
Brian Appold (293-0195)  
Andy Weiss  
Scott Weiss  
Jeffrey Olson  
**Head Usher:** Rollan Berger (684-5944)  
Cell (450-6618)

## December Greeters

|                      |                                                        |                                                               |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Greeters:</b>     | <b>8:00 a.m.</b>                                       | <b>10:30 a.m.</b>                                             |
| <b>Sun., Dec. 1</b>  | Jack & Kathy Lustila<br>Anthony & Kathleen Colone      | Steve & Debra Neuman<br>Lorraine Diment & Paul Begick         |
| <b>Sun., Dec. 8</b>  | Dale & Lynn Jezowski<br>Arthur & Jamie Zeilinger       | Ronald & Ardith Reuther<br>Bonnie List                        |
| <b>Sun., Dec. 15</b> | Tom & Nancy Hoerauf<br>Lura Gehrman & Rita Tilley      | Marie Hendrick & Jean Begick<br>Tiffany List & Rachel Abraham |
| <b>Sun., Dec. 22</b> | Angela Buda<br>David & Stacey Hildebrant               | Vaughn & Margie Begick<br>Janet Beckers & Paulette Beckers    |
| <b>Sun., Dec. 29</b> | Anthony & Kathleen Colone<br>Wayne & Darlene Zeilinger | Floyd & Julia Appold<br>Marian & Terry Kernstock              |

## *St. Paul Lutheran Church Calendar*

# DECEMBER 2019