



St. Paul Epistle December 2025

Candles, Community, and Christ

Can you believe that December is already here?! For the church, this means that we are starting a new church year and entering into the season of Advent. November 30 is the fourth Sunday before Christmas this year, so it is the start of the season.

The word Advent comes from Latin, and it means “to come.” These weeks before Christmas are a period of waiting for Jesus to come to earth, to be born and laid in a manger.

Perhaps one of the most iconic fixtures of the season of Advent is the Advent wreath: an evergreen wreath affixed with five candles (four for each Sunday in Advent and one Christ candle to light on Christmas). The purpose of an Advent wreath is to ritualistically light one of the candles each Sunday to remember that even in the darkness of winter, we can wait with hope for the Light of the World to come. As each of the candles has a different word and meaning associated with it, we do this waiting knowing that the One who is coming, the Light of the World, is the One who will bring Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love to the world: Jesus Christ.

This period of Advent, or waiting, also mirrors the waiting we do as Christians who await the coming of the Kingdom of God to earth. We spend not only a season waiting, but also lives waiting - anticipating the coming of Christ who is the source of Light and Life.

Something that I find interesting about the Advent candles is that while each has a shorter word that is associated with it, there is also another name or theme that goes alongside it, and that theme is always rooted in relationship: relationship with God and relationship with one another as a Christian community.

The first Sunday in Advent is for the Hope candle, also called the “Prophecy Candle” and it takes us back to Isaiah and the prophet’s words of promise of the birth of Christ. This first week in Advent reminds us to be strong in reminding one another of the Hope in the world - reminding one another that even in the darkness, there is light to come in the form of Jesus Christ.

The second Sunday in Advent has the Peace candle, also known as the “Bethlehem Candle.” This candle reminds us of the journey - the journey that Mary and Joseph took to Bethlehem, the journey in the Old Testament from a promised land to exile and back, and the journey of life now as we await Christ’s return. The end of the journey, or the destination, is one of peace - peace on Earth as Christ has come. This is your reminder that journeys are rarely taken alone. The road is much less arduous when there is someone to lean on, and the destination so much more sweet when there is someone to share it with. Peace isn’t for one, but for all - the peace of God in Christ through the Spirit is meant to be shared with the world!

Our third and iconically pink candle is the Joy candle! We also call this candle the “Shepherd’s Candle.” This candle reminds us of the shepherds who so joyfully made their way to Bethlehem to be witnesses to this Christ child. Sometimes the church calls this Sunday “Gaudete Sunday,” which means to rejoice or praise. The angels came to the shepherds to tell them of “good news of great joy,” and the shepherds shared that joy with one another and with Mary, Joseph, and Jesus. Joy is not meant to be held alone - it’s meant to be shouted about! It’s meant

to grow with anticipation and bubble out to all you meet - to rejoice in Christ our Savior, the Source of our joy, is one of the greatest parts about being in a worshipping community.

Our fourth and final candle is the Love candle, also known as the "Angel's Candle." This candle is the reminder of the Angel's announcement of just who is being born for us: "the Messiah, the Lord." God loves us so much that God sent Jesus to live with us. Even as his earthly life came to an end, God in Christ through the Spirit continues to love us instead of forsaking us as we were raised to new life along with Christ. It is a great thing to be so loved by God that God chooses to be close to us. We wait, basking in the promise of great love from God for all of creation. How can we not be like the angels and share this tenderness, care, and love?

So, this Advent, I hope you can take a moment to join us either online for our noon devotions or in-person on Sundays for worship so that together we can explore what it means to be in this season of waiting. As we engage with the traditions of Advent, may we remember that we do so in community, waiting to be drawn closer to God and one another by the coming of the Christ Child, Jesus Christ.

Blessings,

-Pr. Riley

I would like to thank St. Paul for the beautiful bouquet of flowers and to Lorraine Hussung for the delivery. ~ Evelyn Cornwell

**Thank you to all who helped at the church workday in November.
The grounds and building look wonderful!**



**Dear St. Paul Lutheran, Thank you so much for your generous donation to our mini food center! We truly appreciate your kindness. We know this is a much-needed service and we are truly grateful for those who help keep it stocked!
Thank you again, United Way of Lee County**

Thank you for the help and support of the Chili Supper at ILC this year ~ over \$1,700 was raised for Buddy Bags, which is enough to cover the program for an entire week (about 250 kids). Thanks be to God!

It has been a very busy November at St Paul and thank you to one and all who helped. Thank you for all the cookies taken to The Festival of Trees to benefit Rock River Hospice.

Thank you for all the support for the organ concert by Ross Jallo.

He promised to come back next November.

Thank you for giving to the LSSI Holiday Hope Chest to buy gifts for those in need.

Thank you for all the toys you have donated to Goodfellows.

Thank you for all the gifts at the baby shower.

Thank you for attending the Advent Tea on November 23.

All of your giving is very appreciated by the Social Ministry Committee and WELCA

WELCA Coffee

Wednesday, December 10th 9:00 am

in the fellowship hall. All are welcome!

**Enjoy lively conversation, great coffee, and
a delicious breakfast!**



Looking
Forward

Work is continuing on accessibility in the church,
so keep an eye out for the ways we are making the
church a more welcoming and accommodating space for
everyone, like with our doors and making more space
in between pews in the sanctuary for
walkers and wheelchairs.

In preparation for the Annual Congregational Meeting,
annual reports are due to the church office by January 7th



We remember Terry McCarter who passed away on November 14th.

Worship Assistants Serving in December

Saturday December 6 ~ at Immanuel

Sunday December 7 ~ Robin Colglazier

Saturday December 13 ~ Marian Myers

Sunday December 14 ~ Children/Youth

Saturday December 20 ~ at Immanuel

Sunday December 21 ~ Glen Hughes

Wednesday December 24 ~ 3 pm Lester Hallquist 7 pm ~ at Immanuel

Thursday December 25 ~ 10 am at Immanuel

Saturday December 27 ~ No service

Sunday December 28 ~ 10 am Joint Service at St. Paul ~ Joyce Craney



Looking for an opportunity to serve and be more
involved at St. Paul? We need people to serve on
Council or St. Paul Ministries. If you are willing
or have questions about what being a member of

either of these would entail, please reach out to the pastors or call the church office.

Our church is growing, and positive things are happening.

What a great chance to help that continue!

We celebrate with those who have a December birthday

- 2 Krista Shehorn
- 3 Tim Garnhart, Anita Mezo
- 6 Dan Hallquist, Judy Hallquist
- 8 Judith Garnhart
- 10 Rose Hamill, Larry Ulferts
- 11 Gretchen Binkley
- 14 Cierra Bollman
- 15 Marge Stichter
- 17 Vincent Hoyle
- 19 Louise Reed
- 20 Emily Strom, Delilah Alvarez
- 21 Leo Peterson
- 23 Arlene Glaser, Sonja Magnafici
- 24 Adelita Alvarez
- 28 Marbella Alvarez, Mallory Wolf
- 29 Roberta Tourtillott
- 30 John Wilson



The Church Office will be CLOSED
Wednesday, December 24
&
Thursday, December 25

Merry Christmas
from the Church Office!



Mid-Week ADVENT SERVICES

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH ~ 960 US 52, AMBOY, Illinois
December 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th

Join us for 4 nights of reflection and meditation Services start at 6:00 PM
All are welcome

Why not take the next page and use it to invite a friend?

ST. PAUL & IMMANUEL LUTHERAN 2025 CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE: ILC, DEC. 20, 5:30 PM

EARLY CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE: SPLC, DEC. 24, 3:00 PM

LATE CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE: ILC, DEC. 24, 7:00 PM

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE: ILC, DEC. 25, 10:00 AM

NO SERVICE SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27

JOINT LESSONS & CAROLS SERVICE: SPLC, DEC. 28, 10:00 AM



Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign.
Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,

and shall call his name Immanuel.

ISAIAH 7:14

ILC YOUTH & FAMILY SPLC

December Newsletter

WARM GREETINGS

Wishing you a joyful holiday season filled with love, laughter, and cherished moments. May this Christmas bring peace and happiness to you and your family.

NOVEMBER Y & F HIGHLIGHTS



Confirmation class fun!



Christmas shopping for Goodfellows November 9th!

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◆ LIFE TOGETHER... Page 2

This year has been full of memories, growth, and milestones. As we wrap up, we are grateful for every connection, experience, and opportunity that made 2025 unforgettable.

◆ LOOKING AHEAD... Page 3

Here's to new beginnings, exciting adventures, and more beautiful memories in the coming year.

◆ DECEMBER CALENDAR... Page 4

Participating, Serving, Giving and Growing are all part of our amazing and glorious walk with God. Consider joining us for some activities ahead.

www.stpauldixon.org

www.ilcdixon.com

Confirmation class begins meeting at Immanuel January 4 (1 - 3pm).

DECEMBER CHILDREN'S CHANGE/OFFERING

ST PAUL:



IMMANUEL:



ELCA World Hunger

LIFE TOGETHER...

"Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves."

Romans 12:10



Snowtubing
January 2025



Quake
February 2025



Affirmation of Faith
May 2025



Lifest
July 2025



Scarecrow Festival
October 2025



VBS
June 2025



LOMC Retreat
September 2025

LOOKING AHEAD...



"Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing."

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Living Nativity Christmas Program



ILC Youth: Show up; Participate!

December 21st at 9:00 a.m.

—we'd love to have you involved!



Snowtubing
January 11th
10:30am - 5:30pm



Sign-Up Now!!

ST PAUL CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM & WORSHIP

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, 10:45 AM

"CHRISTMAS HIDE AND SEEK"



by Kathy Skogen-Soldner

Rehearsals during Sunday school on
Nov. 30 and December 7.

QUAKE
YOUTH ENCOUNTERING THE GOSPEL



Who: 6 - 12th graders
When: **FEBRUARY 13 - 15, 2026**
Where: Wilderness Resort
Wisconsin Dells
Early registration is now closed.

Check with Gerad & Somar
about late registration and
for more details!

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING FOR LSSI

Wednesday, December 10th after school (3 pm) students all ages and adults are invited to meet at St Paul, then go Christmas shopping at Dixon Walmart for the LSSI group home in Dixon. Supported by St Paul's November Children's offering and Thrivent. We'll conclude at 4:30pm at St Paul with hot chocolate and cookies! Parents/guardians needed for driving/helping!



ST PAUL LUTHERAN SPAGHETTI DINNER

FEBRUARY 25
4 - 7PM



HALF THE PROCEEDS SUPPORTS FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN DIXON AND HALF THE PROCEEDS SUPPORTS ST PAUL YOUTH MINISTRIES.

SPLC: Gerad Von Holten
Email: youth@stpauldixon.org

Contact us:

ILC: Somar Bryson
Email: yfdirector@ilcdixon.org

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
30	1 Immanuel (ILC) FtBY 3:30-5:30 pm	2	3	4	5	6
7 SS ILC: 9am SS SPLC: 9:30am Confirmation 1-3pm @ St Paul	8 Immanuel (ILC) FtBY 3:30-5:30 pm	9	10 Christmas shopping for LSSI group home 3 - 4:30pm	11	12	13
14 SS ILC: 9am SS SPLC: 9:30am SPLC: Christmas Program @ 10:45am	15 Immanuel (ILC) FtBY 3:30-5:30 pm	16	17	18	19	20 5:30pm Service @ SPLC 6:30pm Concert Longest Night
21 ILC: Living Nativity Christmas Program - 9am No SS SPLC No Confirmation Class	22 Immanuel (ILC) No FtBY	23	24 3pm Service @ SPLC 7pm Service @ ILC	25 10am Service @ ILC Merry Christmas	26	27 NO worship services
28 No SS ILC No SS SPLC 10am joint- worship service @ SPLC	29 Immanuel (ILC) No FtBY	30	31	1 SPLC/ILC Closed Happy New Year	2	3
 						





All women of Immanuel Lutheran and St. Paul
are invited to the
Mary Circle Christmas luncheon
on Dec. 4th, 11:30AM, at the River's Edge.
You do not have to be a Circle member to join us.
Please contact Dianna Toms at: (815)-288-5654,
by noon on the 2nd if you are joining.

Brass Quintet Christmas Concert

Saturday, December 20, 6:30 PM at
Immanuel Lutheran Church

Join us for a festive evening of Christmas favorites — from
classic carols to beloved Christmas movie music — plus a
Christmas sing-along! Free Concert! All Are Welcome!

Advent log craft and pie on November 23

We had a fun intergenerational event celebrating the beginning
of Advent. Thanks to all who helped and to all who participated!



December 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 10:00 am Prayer Team 5:00 pm Line Dancing 6:00 pm Property Committee Meeting	2 9:00 am Line Dancing 9:00 am Staff Meeting at ILC	3 1:00 pm Worship & Music Committee Meeting 3:00 pm Christian Ed/Faith Formation Meeting	4 11:00 am Chair Yoga 11:30 am Joint Mary Circle Christmas Luncheon at River's Edge	5	6 5:30 pm Worship at Immanuel
7 9:30 am-10:30 am Christmas Program rehearsal 10:45 am Worship 1:00-3:00 pm Joint Confirmation Class at St. Paul .	8 10:00 am Prayer Team 5:00 pm Line Dancing	9 9:00 am Line Dancing 9:00 am Staff Meeting at ILC	10 9:00 am WELCA Coffee 2:30 pm Finance Committee 3:00-4:30 pm Christmas Shop- ping for LSSI 5:30 pm Praise Band rehearsal	11 11:00 am Chair Yoga	12 1:30 pm Liberty Court Worship	13 5:30 pm Worship at St. Paul
14 9:30 am-10:30 am Sunday School 10:45 Children/ Youth led Program/ Worship Praise Band	15 10:00 am Prayer Team 5:00 pm Line Dancing	16 9:00 am Line Dancing 9:00 am Staff Meeting at ILC	17 10:30 am Heritage Square Worship 5:00 pm Praise Band rehearsal 6:00 pm Council Meeting	18 11:00 am Chair Yoga	19	20 Longest Night Service 5:30 pm Worship at Immanuel 6:30 pm Brass Quintet Concert
21 No Sunday School or Confirmation Class (Christmas Break) 10:45 am Worship Praise Band	22 10:00 am Prayer Team 5:00 pm Line Dancing Epistle Items due to Church Office	23 9:00 am Line Dancing 9:00 am Staff Meeting at ILC	24 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED 3:00 pm Christmas Eve Service at St. Paul 7:00 pm Christmas Eve Service at ILC	25 10:00 am Christmas Day Service at St. Paul CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED	26	27 No Service
28 No Sunday School (Christmas Break) 10:00 am Joint Lessons & Carols Service at St. Paul	29 10:00 am Prayer Team 5:00 pm Line Dancing	30 9:00 am Line Dancing 9:00 am Staff Meeting at ILC	31			

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Office Hours: Monday – Thursday, 8:30 am - 1:30 pm
Phone: 815-288-2757
Email: pastoragwindau@gmail.com
pastorreedwindau@gmail.com

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Staff

Rev. Riley Reed-Windau & Rev. Anthony Windau
Co-Pastors

Gerad Von Holten - Director of Youth and
Family Ministries

Rhonda Thomas - Secretary

Brenda Nailor & Sharon Colglazier - General Funds
Treasurers

Lorraine Hussung - Special Funds Treasurer

Church Council

Robin Colglazier – President
Patty Hallquist – Vice President
Joyce Craney – Secretary
Carol Moats
Jeanette McWethy
Julie Pitchford
Linda Patterson
Cyndi Starr