



St. Paul  
Lutheran Church

# Walking Together

St. Paul Lutheran Church and School  
Catonsville, MD  
December 2023

## Peace Came to Earth

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In the month of December, we will learn a new hymn for Advent and Christmas entitled “Peace Came to Earth”. The text was written by well-known hymn writer, Jaroslav Vajda.

The text is a meditation on the meaning and importance of the Incarnation, that God himself took on human flesh and became a man for our sakes. The result of that great exchange (the powerful, divine Son of God in the form of sinful people) is peace, peace on earth. The refrain piles on verbs to portray the greatness of Christ who is “Immanuel”: gasp, sigh, see, pray, sing, shout, thrill, praise.

The third verse reminds us that the Incarnation shows us God himself, that God took flesh to do away with sin and that the Lord’s Supper brings that enfleshed God to us in bread and wine:

*You show the Father none has ever seen,  
in flesh and blood you bore our griefs and pains,  
in bread and wine you visit us again  
Who could but see: Immanuel!  
Who could but thrill: Immanuel!*

IMMANUEL  
—God With Us—

There are a couple of hymn tunes associated with this text. We will use the one entitled “Peace Came to Earth” and composed by Richard Jeffries and included in the most recent WELS hymnal, *Christian Worship*.

May this hymn bless and deepen your Advent preparation and your Christmas joy!

About Jaroslav Vajda: Born in 1919 (he died in 2008) Vajda was a prolific hymn writer who authored or translated over 200 hymn texts, including 10 in our own LSB. Vajda was of Slavic descent and was the son of a LCMS pastor as well as being an LCMS pastor himself. Interestingly, he did not write his first hymn until the age of 49. Some other of his texts which you probably know include “See This Wonder in the Making” (LSB 593) and “Go My Children with My Blessing” (LSB 922).

Pastor Alms

## Advent and Christmas Resources

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1. Advent Devotional Booklets for December (Peace Came to Earth) and a Christmas book for kids (Little Jesus Born for Me) are available in the Narthex. Supplies are limited so get yours quick!
2. Lutheran Hour Ministries has Advent devotionals online: <https://www.lhm.org/advent/>
3. The LCMS has a page for Advent: <https://www.lcms.org/worship/advent>
4. The LWML also offers helpful material: <https://www.lwml.org/posts/category/advent>

# Advent & Christmas Worship 2023



Sunday mornings: Worship at 10 AM

Midweek Advent Services: Mary: Example for Us

11 AM or 7 PM

Wednesdays December 6, 13 & 20

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent, Dec. 24

10 AM worship (No Bible Classes)

Christmas Eve

Family Service: 7 PM

Candlelight Service: 10 PM (Communion)

Christmas Day

Lessons & Carols: 10 AM (Communion)

First Sunday after Christmas

10 AM worship (No Bible Classes)



## From the Congregational President

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It's cold out this week. Time to get prepared for winter. We have already had a couple of fires in the fireplace to make the house warm and snuggly. Not only are we getting prepared for winter, but also for Christmas!

Thanks to everyone who came to the voters meeting in November. We will be moving forward with the reallocation of surplus funds.

Other things that council is working on is the sale of the house near the cemetery. We have also met to discuss the church strategy over the next years. We had a wonderful first discussion that is leading us toward prioritizing the church missions that we have so we can focus other efforts in a direct relationship to our missions. We will have more of these meetings. Also, we are kicking off the Capital Campaign efforts with a meeting the first week of December with LCEF. We will have more information to come on that.

I would also like to remind everyone about visiting the church and school during school hours (7am to 6pm). If you come into the building, we ask that check in at the front office. This goes for everyone, even those who have their own keys to the building. This will help protect not only the church and school, but also our visitors. In case of emergency, it is necessary to know who is in the building. Please make every effort to check in before doing your business in the building during these hours.

As always, feel free to email or call me if you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

Blessings to all,  
Aaron Nelson  
nelsaar@yahoo.com.

## News From the Elders

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The elders for FY 2023-2024 are Kevin Dungey (Chairman), Jim Baeder, Norm Giguere, Roy Krakat, Bill Oldhouser, Jeff Piegols, and Bruce Staudinger. Please contact any of us with personal concerns via email, phone, or in person.

A committee of the elders called the Adult Education Sub-Committee, consisting of Pastor Alms, Kevin Dungey, Bill Oldhouser, Dana Stigdon, Cameron Jones, and Heather Krakat, has been meeting to chart the future course of Adult Education at St. Paul. The overall goal is to increase the opportunity for St. Paul members (and guests) to have regular access to Bible Study not just on Sunday mornings but also during the week. Feedback so far for the fall semester indicates that the six-week sequence of different Bible study topics in the Fellowship Hall on Sundays, 9:45-10:45 AM, along with another Bible Study offering that meets in one of the classrooms, has worked well. Therefore, this six-week schedule of different classes and teachers will continue in 2024. The Winter I class in the Fellowship Hall will run from January 7-February 11 (Ash Wednesday is February 14, 2024), Winter II will run February 18-March 24 (Easter is March 31, 2024), and Spring I will run April 7 through May 12. Beginning May 19, 2024, we will move into the summer schedule of different offerings run by different teachers each Sunday. The committee further plans to offer a weekday evening class at church and a weekday morning Bible study at a St. Paul member's home. The details of who will teach what section/class will be announced once the teachers and topics are settled, but Pastor Alms will certainly be teaching one of the Sunday six-week classes in the Winter/Spring of 2024 probably on a book of the Bible.

The elders and Pastor Alms have been discussing partnering with another church or LCMS organization in the Baltimore area so that we can afford to bring in a vicar (a Pastor in training) for a year's vicarage. Pastor has held preliminary discussions with President Harmon of the Southeastern District, our local Baltimore Circuit Pastors, the Director of Vicarage at Concordia Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and Reverend David Maack, Director of the Lutheran Mission Society. Nothing is settled yet (there are more applications asking for vicars than there are vicars available), but this looks feasible. If a vicar were called, it would be for the fall of 2025.

Finally, the elders aspire to increase the opportunities members of St. Paul have to get to know each other better, to have more opportunities for fellowship. While we all treasure and enjoy our coffee hour after church, we probably only get to visit with just a few of our fellow St. Paul members. We would also like St. Paul to be more financially generous (that would require a stronger Stewardship effort). We would like to identify more St. Paul members who desire to serve and find a way to make that possible. And could we find a way to develop a ministry to one of the college campuses near us in Baltimore? These are some of our aspirations for the future of St. Paul. If you find this interesting or feel called in any way, please let one of us know.

In His service,  
Kevin Dungey,  
Board of Elders

## Community Craft Day

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A time and space to work on any craft you choose to bring (how about Christmas!) and have some time of fellowship also. The Fellowship Hall will be open for Craft Day on Sat. Dec. 2 from 11:00 – 4:00.

## Women's Guild - LWML

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Ladies, a lot is happening the month of December so please mark your calendars with these important dates.

Food bags for St Thomas are due back **December 15th**. (Items needed for each bag: 1 box stuffing, 1 box instant potatoes, 2 cans corn, 2 cans green beans or peas, 1 jar gravy, 1 jar peanut butter, 1 jar jelly, 1 cake mix & icing OR brownie mix.) We deliver them on **December 16th**.

Looking for bakers for our annual cookie walk that will be held on **December 17th**, also need some kid friendly cookies to sell during kids Christmas morning **December 9th**. We need help with both events. Please get in touch with me with any questions. [grammie\\_ahdad@comcast.net](mailto:grammie_ahdad@comcast.net)



**December 19th** is our Christmas dinner at the home of Doreen McDonald, sign-up sheet on the bulletin board next to the flower chart.

Carolyn Louden

## Kid's Christmas Morning

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This annual event is a wonderful opportunity for children to celebrate the "Reason for the Season!" Join us for the Christmas story, crafts, gingerbread houses, and photos with Santa! Register for timed entry. [Register HERE](#). Help is needed for set-up Friday night at 7:00, and again on Saturday morning 8:30 - Noon to lead crafts, hospitality, registration, and clean up. To joyfully volunteer, see Karyn Borth. [K.borth@icloud.com](mailto:K.borth@icloud.com)



## Youth Christmas Get Together

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**Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup>** after worship. Bring a white elephant gift! Bring cookies or snacks to share! Christmas fun!

## Angel Tree

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Angels have flown in! We have names from the children in the inner-city community around St. Thomas Lutheran Church. We have 20 children to gift this Christmas. Each child has asked for 3 presents, and we have listed one gift per angel.

Procedure: select an angel gift. Write your name next to the RED number on the angel tree list. Buy the gift and wrap it. Then attach the angel securely to the gift, NAME AND NUMBER showing. Return gift to green bin in the narthex by Wednesday, December 13. If you have questions, contact Betsy Mitchell or Irene Giguere. Thank you for giving these children a special Christmas-and by reaching out with God's love.



# St. Paul Lutheran School

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## The Nazareth Evening News

Please join us for our Christmas Program on Thursday, **December 14<sup>th</sup>**. Two opportunities to see the show - the first is a daytime show at 11 am that will run kind of like a dress rehearsal. This is still a great opportunity for folks who can't get out at night to come view the program and all are welcome. The evening show will be held at 6 pm. This show is sure to be spectacular and something you won't want to miss.

## Christmas Invitations

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Thank you to Pam Johnsson and Heather Krakat for creating this lovely Christmas invitation to share with all you know. These will be distributed the first Sunday of December with extras available in the narthex. Watch for an electronic version later this month to share on social media.



## Coat Collection

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Orphan Grain Train is again collecting warm winter coats and jackets. The garments will be given to several inner city Lutheran churches to distribute to their surrounding communities. They will also be distributed through local relief organizations. We have need of new or gently used winter coats/jackets for men, women and children - but **this year especially, for children.**

The Giguere COATMOBILE (i.e. red pickup truck) will be in the parking lot every Sunday through December 10, coats will be collected through December 15. Bag your coats and put them in the bed of the truck. You may also place other items for OGT (bedding, clothing, fabric, medical equipment, shoes, soft toys, children's books, etc.) in the truck.

**Orphan Grain Train** †

# Updates From the Mission Board

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## ESL Recap

Our Fall session of English Class ended on November 20. We finished the class with a party, complete with international food, dancing and Bingo! This Fall we had our largest registration ever- 35 students. After a few sessions, numbers declined ( family responsibilities, overtime work, moving, desire for a more traditional curriculum, etc.) BUT class attendance usually hovered between 22-26 students- still an all-time high for us. Due to numbers and varied language ability, we had to divide the class into a beginner and intermediate grouping.

Most students this year came from countries in Central America, but also represented were the countries of Pakistan, China, Viet Nam, and Peru. Such a great group of students! But also such a great team of teachers and helpers. Special thanks to Joyce Waibel, Betsy Whipps, Toni Hiteshew, Mary Techau, Martha Wagley (who bikes from work to class and then home), and Leann Craumer (new this year). Also thanks to Maria Frantz and James Frank who, occasionally, have jumped in to sub.

Winter session begins on Monday, January 22 and runs through Monday, March 25. With colder weather, not sure what this means for class attendance. However, opportunities abound for volunteers. Can you give one night a week to help with the lessons? Are you willing to jump in and sub occasionally? Would you be willing to make a dessert/snack for one of the evenings? Contact me, Irene Giguere, for questions (note: I can be persuasive), more information, or to volunteer. Classes meet Monday and Thursday nights, 7:15 – 9:00 p.m. Hopefully, we'll see you at one of our classes!



## Trunk or Treat Recap

A big "Thank You!" to all participants in this year's Trunk of Treat event. The weather was perfect, trunks were creative and fun, and the volunteers were amazing! We broke all previous records with 19 decorated trunks, 265 children attended (plus parents and grandparents), candy galore thanks to generous donations by the congregation, and a wonderful feeling of community spirit. Everyone is already looking forward to next year!

Thanks to our congregation 'trunk-sters': Dave Carnes, Kirsten Hall, Stan Stigdon, Christina Unglesbee, Kate Baeder, Melissa Sunstrom, Betsy Mitchell, JB & Hannah Jaeger, Andia Orujov, Yvette Prince and Karen Eichelman. And our school and community 'trunk-sters': Maria Frantz, Derek Eichelman, Michelle Flester, Alex Miller, Amanda Fountain, Jayme Garman, Angela Williams, Peggy Landel, and Alex Wiltse.

Thanks to our other volunteers for making it happen: Pam Johnsson, Dana Stigdon, Heather Krakat, Ron Bennett, Brian Erwin, Kevin Dungey, Norm Giguere, Irene Giguere, John Borth, Linda Klingmeyer, Paul Baeder, Debbie Frech, Denise Frech, and Jim Lister photography.

We had one good-will donation, one prayer request, handed out family devotional booklets, and offered all who attended the opportunity to participate in the Shoe Box project.

Thank you again to the T or T Committee: Karyn Borth, Irene Giguere, Kate Baeder, Betsy Mitchell, Maria Frantz, and Karen Eichelman

## Mission Brunch 2024

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MISSION BRUNCH 2024 will feature Rev. Dr. Alexey Streltsov of the Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church. Dr. Streltsov is a friend of Pastor Alms and has a fascinating story of coming to faith in Russia in the wake of the end of the USSR and the emergence of a homegrown Lutheran church in Siberia. The date is January 28<sup>th</sup>. More details to come. In the meantime, visit <https://siberianlutheranmissions.org/> to learn more.

## January Mission Project

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### Together We Make a Difference: Health Care Kits

On January 24th, we will have a church and school event where we put together health care kits for those in need. School classes will gather items, the church will donate items and we will come together on January 24th for dinner, school and church, together. Then we will put together the kits. There is a great need for these kits that will be distributed by the Lutheran Mission Society.

## Positions Opening at St. Paul

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A search committee has been formed to begin the search for a new Principal for the 2024-2025 school year. If you know any qualified candidates that you would like to recommend, please contact Carolyn Loudon at 410-707-0615 or [grammie\\_ahdad@comcast.net](mailto:grammie_ahdad@comcast.net). We are also beginning the process to hire a new administrative assistant. That part time position for Administrative Assistant is posted on Indeed.com. If you know any qualified candidates you would like to recommend, please contact Pastor Alms.

## Disaster Response & Training Conference

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Have you ever volunteered in response to a disaster? Want to know how your church can get involved in disaster response ministry? Looking for practical training and instruction?

Join the Southeastern District in beautiful Myrtle Beach, January 25-27, for two exciting days (and an optional half-day) of practical training sessions, reports from the field, enjoyable fellowship, inspiring first-hand ministry stories, and information on upcoming service opportunities! [Click here for more info!](#)

## Lutheran Mission Society Worker Needed

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LMS Compassion Place is seeking a full-time worker/driver with a clean driving record (CDL not required) to join our transportation team. Our crews pick up and deliver donations -- clothing, furniture, household items, food, etc. -- to service the nine LMS Compassion Centers.

This is a full time position with benefits, Monday thru Friday, 7:30 AM - 3:30 PM. Applicant must have own transportation to-and-from work. Please contact Bruce Cameron, Director of Transportation & Facilities, at 410-636-0123, Ext. 15, or email [bcameron@CompassionPlace.org](mailto:bcameron@CompassionPlace.org).