

# EPIS<sup>+</sup>LE



*St. Paul's Lutheran  
The Church On The Hill*

Volume 64 No. 12

December - 2020

## Pastor's Message

**"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:38-39**

Two weeks ago we had to make the decision to suspend in person attendance in our sanctuary and go to online worship using our wonderful Video Streaming equipment donated by Albin Linsenbardt and the AT&T network subscription service paid by Doug & Julie Carel and Jim & Debbie Linsenbardt.

**NOTE: If you do not have Internet service please contact Pastor David. We will provide limited seating inside the church. We are also working to install an FM radio transmitter so people can drive up and stay in their cars while listening to the service.**

This week we mourn the loss of Gertrude Strobel who died last week and was in church one last time for her funeral service on December 1, 2020.

We have all been separated from each other in one way or another because of this Covid-19 virus. When one of us goes into the hospital, no one is allowed to visit them at this time. Even during an emergency, the spouse or other loved one can go no further than the waiting room and is directed to sit in the car until notified.

Life has changed for the worse during these last few months and maybe a few more months to come. It can seem discouraging and overwhelming at times and we may wonder if we will make it through.

But then God's holy word reminds us of the promise of blessings we have been given. I read the scripture I noted above as I was preparing for Gert's funeral and felt a weight lift from my shoulders as I realized all we are going through at this moment in time is only temporary.

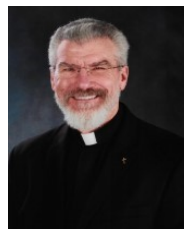
No matter how hard it seems to cope and how difficult it really is to struggle just to make it through one more day, God is present with us.

God's love surrounds us and brings us comfort as we relax in his arms that brings us peace when we let go and look to him for a love that cannot be matched or received from any other source.

Read the scripture from Romans shown above and consider what it is telling you. Death itself does not separate us from God's love. This life we are living does not separate us from God's love. Angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

When life seems tough and nothing is going well for you, look up and remember, we have an awesome God who will never let us go and will always love us no matter what happens.

Blessings to you in Christ Jesus,  
Pastor David



**DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS**

*Happy Birthday to you!*

- 3 Alan Scheperle
- 4 Kent Nelson
- 8 Bill Wyss
- 10 Thea Fischer
- 11 Miranda England
- 11 Madison Williams
- 12 Natalie Kalaf
- 12 Gage Ferrell
- 16 Elda Pistel
- 16 Leroy Plochberger
- 19 Adam Grunden
- 24 Mark Meller
- 25 Jana Thompson
- 28 Larry Koestner
- 30 Julie Carel
- 31 Tony Miller

**FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Month/Day	Attendance Phys./Virtual	Offering
<b>NOVEMBER 1</b>	<b>59 / 405</b>	<b>\$4,528.00</b>
<b>NOVEMBER 8</b>	<b>53 / 122</b>	<b>\$2,556.37</b>
<b>NOVEMBER 15</b>	<b>62 / 210</b>	<b>\$2,001.00</b>
<b>NOVEMBER 22</b>	<b>66 / 349</b>	<b>\$1,010.00</b>
<b>NOVEMBER 29</b>	<b>06 / 241</b>	<b>\$2,780.00</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>246 / 1327</b>	<b>\$12,875.37</b>

**In Addition:**

Mission Envelopes for ELCA Disaster Relief Fund totaled \$650.00

Reformation Envelopes for the Samaritan Center totaled \$340.00

Thanksgiving Envelopes for the Rape and Abuse Crisis currently amounts to \$220.00

Special Thanks to Glenda Kappelmann & Rick Clawson who send Thanksgiving and Christmas greetings to their St. Paul's friends, and a gift of \$250.00 to the church.

**Memorial Offerings:**

Total offerings given in memory of Albin Linsenbardt for St. Paul's church is \$2,590.00. Thank you to all family and friends who showed their love for Albin in this way.

Also \$200.00 was given to St. Paul's WELCA Kitchen Fund in memory of the many meals Albin enjoyed with his church family.

An additional \$2,589.75 was given to the Cemetery Fund in memory of Albin Linsenbardt.

The Cemetery Fund also received \$4,500.00 in memory of Olivia and Franz W. Linhardt given by Dan & Joyce Linhardt and Mark & Donna Linhardt.

These gifts will keep the Cemetery grounds beautifully mowed and cared for as a lasting tribute to all who are buried.



**DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES**

- 13 Jim & Cynthia Loesch 1975 **45 Years**
- 13 Bill & Sharon Wyss 1996
- 16 Brian & Leann Hager 1989
- 27 Tony & Connie Miller 1997
- 28 Dave & Debbie Boyce 2011
- 29 Wilfred & Jennifer Plochberger 1990 **30 Yrs.**
- 29 Don & Becky Weber 1973

**Continued prayers for healing and comfort.**

Kent Nelson, Julie Carel, baby Jane Grimm, Vanessa Pyatt, Donna Viles, Chris Russell, Pat Collins, Jade Westbrooks, Penberthy family..



**Welcome to Patty Duncan and Jake Thompson who joined St. Paul's Church on November 8, 2020**

**Landin Jacob Thompson was baptized on November 15, 2020.**

As you can see from the big smiles on Landin and Pastor's face this was a wonderful event filled with Joy and thanksgiving. This was the last week of in person attendance and there were 62 people who came to see Landin become a baptized child of God. We welcome Landin into the community of St. Paul's church.



***Condolences and heartfelt sympathy for Gertrude Strobel's family and friends.***  
 Gert's funeral was held Tuesday, December 1, 2020 and was broadcast on Facebook Live at 11:00 a.m. on the church FaceBook site:  
<https://www.facebook.com/StPaulsChurchOnTheHill>

Memorials may be sent to St. Paul's Lutheran Church, P.O. Box 15 Lohman, MO. 65053  
 For St. Paul's Lutheran Church or the Cemetery Fund.

**Obituary for Gertrude Strobel**

Gertrude Pauline Strobel, 96, of Lohman, passed away Wednesday, November 25, 2020, at her residence. She was born February 29, 1924, in Lohman, the daughter of the late Alfred and Antonia (Michael) Raithel.

Gert was a 1943 graduate of Jefferson City High School and attended the University of Missouri in Columbia. She was united in marriage on June 24, 1967, in Lohman, to Hugo Albert Strobel who preceded her in death on September 23, 2012.

Gert worked for Metropolitan Life as a bookkeeper and eventually retired in 1981 as assistant office manager. After retirement, she become the City Clerk for Lohman until 1993. She was a member of the La Vida chapter of the American Business Women's Association in Jefferson City, where she served as the first president. She was named the Chapter's 1956 American Business Woman of the Year. Gert was a life-long member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Lohman where she served as the church organist since 1946. She considered playing the organ as an integral part of her life. She also edited the church's newsletter for over 50 years. In 2001, the church named Gert and her husband, Hugo, Volunteers of the Year.

Gert is survived by her nieces and nephews and other extended family members. She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Hugo Strobel; and her twin sisters, Marvelia and Mary Raithel. Visitation will be 10-11 a.m. Tuesday, December 1, 2020, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Lohman. Funeral service will be 11 a.m. Tuesday at St. Paul's Lutheran Church with Pastor David Viles officiating.

Burial was in St. Paul's Lutheran Cemetery next to her beloved husband Hugo.

In lieu of flowers, memorials are suggested to St. Paul's Lutheran Church or the St. Paul's Lutheran Cemetery Fund.

**Officiating:** The Rev. David Viles  
**Organist:** Zola Finch  
**Soloist:** Kathy Meller  
**Audio/Visual:** Dan Tschirgi

**Scripture Readings:**  
 Old Testament Reading: 2 Kings 3:15-17  
 Psalm 98:1, 4-6  
 Gospel – John 10:22-30

**HYMNS:**  
 How Great Thou Art  
 Beautiful Savior  
 The Old Rugged Cross



The service can be viewed on the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/StPaulsChurchOnTheHill>  
 However the original recording had some sound issues due to a tripped breaker, so Pastor David edited the recording and posted it on the church YouTube site. You may view this service on YouTube at:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7EEZdBHdjVj&feature=youtu.be>

## **Paul the Mouse in Memory of Gertrude Strobel**



This is Paul, the Mouse, reporting. Gertrude Strobel passed away on November 25, 2020 in her home. She died peacefully in her sleep with her nephew Eugene Strobel nearby. Pastor visited minutes later and stayed with the family while everything was taken care of by Hospice and the Funeral home.

The Mouse family is heartbroken to hear that Gertrude Strobel, our favorite organist and the one who first adopted our family here at St. Paul's has passed away. Gert was our families' organist for 74 years and she will always be remembered for her love of music by us and the congregations, pastors, wedding couples, baptismal parents and those left behind at funerals.

Gert once saved my great-great-great-great-grandpa Paul as he ran across the front of the church, through all the scary feet of the choir singers and under the organ pedals where Gert kept him safe. She also made sure there was plenty of crumbs left around to feed our families. Paulina and I will forever miss her and the music she brought into our lives.

Our family gathered with Gert's family and visitors on December 1<sup>st</sup> to hear the wonderful stories and sermon by Pastor David. We are so thankful for Zola Finch playing the organ and piano and with David Finch playing the Carillon Keyboard with the sounds of beautiful bells in accompaniment. We will always cherish the angelic voice of Kathy Meller singing three of Gert's favorite hymns.

God speed Gert, we know you are safe in the arms of our Lord where the cheese is abundant and there are no traps, for death will be no more.

## **St. Paul's Epistle: 50 Years Ago 1970 in Memory of Gertrude Strobel**

The 17th anniversary of the Night Circle was observed at our meeting with thirteen members and one guest, Miss Emily Kappelman, of St. Louis, present.

A skit "The Drivers Test" was presented by Mrs. Leroy Plochberger and Mrs. John Scheperle. Sara then presented the Bible study on "The Curse of Poverty." During the business meeting a letter was read from the Bethel Institute, Dankort, Germany, thanking the Women of the Church for the cancelled stamps that are being sent to them.

It was decided to give \$25 to the Fall Mission Festival. The evening offering was \$17. Refreshments were brought by all members with Mrs. Margaret Soell in charge. The home of Mrs. G. F. Fischer Jr. was the setting of the November meeting with 13 members and Pastor and Mrs. Scholl present.

Mrs. Lester Linsenhardt was in charge of the program which consisted of a reading and presentation of an article "Hearts" and leading the discussion of the Bible Study "Money in the Modern World." All members related their occupations, hobbies and interesting facts about their families to acquaint themselves with Pastor and Mrs. Scholl. Members were urged to send cards and packages to the servicemen of the church. Mrs. Fischer served refreshments.

Mr. Ronald Bandelier was united in marriage on November 28 to Miss Dorothy Mae Schroer.

The calendar also notes that on December 22 our Postmaster and his wife, Roy and Royda Weber, will be celebrating their silver anniversary. Our very best wishes to you!

## The Great First Communion Celebration of 2020

St. Paul's Church had five children this year who were welcomed to their first communion service. It has been a difficult year with the Covid-19 virus which has caused many changes and hardships for our Worship Service at St. Paul's since the many restrictions went into place on March 15, 2020 in order that we might be mindful of our church members and keep them safe. The Church Council decided to suspend in person attendance after our service on November 15, 2020. Our First Communion was scheduled for November 22, 2020. But with God's help we prevailed to make it happen. Our kids attended four classes over a month to learn what communion is all about and what it means to us as children of God to receive the body and blood of our Lord in remembrance of him. There was a lot of discussion and a little homework and they all did great. So on Sunday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> the five families attended church separated by social distance and wearing masks until the moment of communion. It was wonderful and I was so proud of these kids as they led their families in receiving communion.



## Ask the Pastor

**Question:** Every year during the Advent season we set up an Advent Wreath with five candles. Why do we do that and what does it mean?



**Answer:** The Advent wreath is a special tradition we use to recognize Jesus the Christ and our expectation of his return in the clouds to judge the living and the dead.

As Lutherans and Christians in general, we use symbols to physically express the beliefs and creeds of our faith. Consider the Cross that is the mainstay of our belief. You will see it on altars, stain glass windows, books and booklets and even worn as a pin or necklace.

There are two Crosses you will see, one is empty and the other has a figure of Jesus hanging on it also known as a crucifix. The empty cross reminds us that Jesus is no longer there but defeated death on the cross and is alive. The crucifix reminds us that the body of Christ did in fact die for the forgiveness of our sins.

In the same way, the Advent wreath with its four candles is a symbol of Christ's return into the world. It is believed the wreath was created by a Lutheran Pastor in Germany by the name of Johann Hinrich Wichern at the beginning of the 1800's. To help the children at a school he founded visually see a count of 24 candles being lit, one each day, until Christmas when they would celebrate the birth of Christ. He made a large wooden ring from an old cart wheel with 20 small red and four large white candles. A red candle was lit each day and a white candle on each Sunday.

large white candles. A red candle was lit each day and a white candle on each Sunday.

From the time of the middle ages, fire has been used to represent the light of Christ returning to the world. The Advent wreath with its candles continues this symbolism as the light grows with each candle lit until all four candles are burning bright and the final fifth candle is lit on Christmas Eve to announce the arrival of baby Jesus with all the light blazing on the wreath.

The wreath, made into a circle, came to represent the eternal victory over death through Jesus Christ. It is an endless loop to show Christ's victory will never end and neither will life as we are given an eternal life with him in the heavenly kingdom.

The evergreens were a sign of the faithfulness of God to God's people, even in death, as evergreens do not lose their leaves like the other flowers and deciduous trees.

The lighted candles are a reminder of the light of Christ brought into the world. They have also come to represent the gifts and blessings we have been given through our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ. The three blue candles represent Hope as we await the second coming of Christ. The pink or rose candle represents the Rejoice of Christ's arrival and the large white candle is the pure light of Christ. In recent years the four candles have been assigned the virtues of Hope, Love, Joy and Peace.

Blessings to you,  
Pastor David

**Trunk or Treat was held this year on Saturday, October 31, 2020 in the parking lot of St. Paul's Church.** We had a great time with a dozen cars who came out with lots of candy for the kiddos and maybe a few adults that act like kids. And also the Fire Truck and volunteers from Lohman and Russellville.





Samaritan's Purse is an organization created by Franklin Graham to provide food, clothes, hygienic supplies, toys, and the word of God to underprivileged children around the world. One such program that occurs every November is the Children's Christmas Shoebox program that St. Paul's recently participated in.

St. Paul's members donated items ranging from small toys, toothbrushes, combs, games, crayons, coloring/activity books, dolls, matchbox cars, and hand towels, etc. A few boxes were brought to church already packed, while others were packed by Kaitlyn Finch, Jahanna Koestner and Laurie Koestner from items purchased with donated funds. A few members made monetary donations to aid in the cost of postage. The price to send each shoebox is \$9. These shoe boxes were delivered to this year's drop zone at Jefferson City Concord Baptist Church. There were about 13 shoe boxes delivered thanks to the generosity of St. Paul's members!

A huge thank you to everyone that was able to participate in this necessary mission. Your time and gifts will make children from around the world very happy this Christmas. Many of the children receiving these shoe boxes have never opened a Christmas present. Again, thank you for your part in this mission. You will make a child have a Merry Christmas this year. May God bless you,

Merry Christmas, Laurie Koestner

## NOTICE



**Giving Envelopes are here. Please come by the church and enter the back doors. The envelopes will be on a table with your name on them. The back Friendship Hall doors will be unlocked from: 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. from December 6<sup>th</sup> through December 20<sup>th</sup>. Thank you for doing this and Christmas Blessings to you.**

**If you can pick up for others in your family or someone close by, please do.**

## Congregational Council Meeting, November 9, 2020

Respectfully submitted by Becky Weber, Church Council Secretary

A Congregational Council meeting called to order by President Zola Finch at 6:00pm on Monday November 9, 2020 in the church basement with social distancing in compliance with Covid 19 guidelines. Present were council members Zola Finch, Kathy Meller, Dan Tschirgi, Delores Vlach, Mitch Plochberger, and Becky Weber. Stacy Bubach was also present to represent Paula Linsenbardt. Also present were Pastor David Viles, and Council Treasurer Kay Pascoe. Absent were Laurie Koestner, Scott Soell, and Paula Linsenbardt.



The meeting was opened with a prayer by Pastor David, followed by a devotion on Matthew 11:28: "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." Pastor David expressed his concerns over this past month's multitude of duties, the various needs of our members and non-members, to include Covid related health issues, and to include his mother-in-law who has now recovered from Covid. Pastor resumed Adult Sunday School and First Communion classes and expressed concern with having to cancel Children's Sunday School. This has brought about a lot of long hours of working at home and little time to spend with his family and puppy. Pastor David has expressed hurt from seeing family and friends across our nation who have been pitted against each other by the State and National Elections and even now that the elections have been determined, the bitterness continues. Pastor David shared with us that what bothers him the most is knowing these things are making your lives and those of all people difficult, which is a heavy burden. Jesus said, "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens and I will give you rest." Our God is an awesome God and He can do all things and just as importantly, He gives us the strength to do all things in His name. In this time of heavy burdens, we can find rest in Jesus. He suggests we consider Hymn 742 in our ELW: "What a friend We Have in Jesus"- "Take it to the Lord in prayer, you will find solace there." Thanks be to God.

President Finch called for approval of the previous council meeting minutes. A motion to approve was made by Dan Tschirgi, seconded by Kathy Meller, and passed via voice vote.

President Finch called on Council Treasurer Kay Pascoe to give the treasurer's report.

Pastor David reported a total of 12 miles for the month of October, and wishes to donate the cost Pastor David was thanked for this. Pastor David reported the following activities for October 2020: Worship and Music meeting, Church Council meeting, City Council, Lions Club, Bishop's Convocation, Mutual Ministry, two home visits, and four church office visits, and multiple phone conversations for counseling and prayers. Additional activities include Food Bank, First Communion Classes, Adult Sunday School, Trunk or Treat, and created, emailed and post mailed the November Epistle. Other activities include: picked up mail at post office, one wedding rehearsal, and performed one wedding ceremony. Pastor performed four in person, with online worship services, two of these were Communion Sundays.

**President Finch called for the Standing Committee Reports which are included below.**

**Evangelism:** Delores Vlach reports Trunk or Treat went very well, with twelve cars and two firetrucks, from Lohman and Russellville. She reports there were some very interesting costumes, one from our own council member, Dan Tschirgi, who dressed as Alice Cooper. Delores requests that if anyone is not receiving the Epistle and would like to get one by mail, to let Pastor David or a council member know. Delores reports the Epistle is available for nonmembers for a small fee. Delores welcomed our two new members, Patty Duncan and Jake Thompson. Welcome Patty and Jake!

**Technology:** Dan Tschirgi reports the new microphone was installed, and our new video equipment is working well.

**Worship & Music:** Kathy Meller reports there will be a re-dedication of our organ and dedication of the Audiovisual system this Sunday. She reports receiving our License Agreement to allow us to legally live stream Sunday worship services. The Worship Committee will meet tomorrow to plan the November worship services and pick the December hymns.

**Parish Education:** Laurie Koestner, absent. Pastor reports there was a nice attendance for “Gods Work, Our Hands” day, with four work activities completed in Russellville, MO. working with Trinity church.

**Church Improvement:** Mitch Plochberger. Mitch reports volunteers have been helping with various projects. He reports he is waiting on two additional bids for the parsonage roof repair. The light pole work and church doors are in progress.

**Stewardship and Finance:** Paula Linsenbardt, absent. Stacy Bubach presented the proposed budget and President Finch called for a motion for provisional approval of the 2021 budget awaiting two items. A motion was made by Mitch Plochberger, seconded by Dan Tschirgi and passed via voice vote.

**Mutual Ministry:** Scott Soell, absent. Pastor David reports background checks are complete.

**Old Business:** President Finch reports we will continue with our current Covid 19 procedures. President Finch reports Cross Training of paid staff positions is currently on hold. No report on Security camera.

**New Business:** President Finch reports the upcoming election for church council will be held January of 2021 at the Annual Congregational meeting. After discussion, it was decided the meeting will be January 17, 2021 directly following worship service. The committee reports are due December 15, 2020. The next council meeting will be December 14, 2020 at 6:00pm

President Finch called for a motion to adjourn. A motion to adjourn was made by Mitch Plochberger, seconded by Kathy Meller, and passed via voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 8:10pm  
Pastor closed the meeting with The Lord’s Prayer.

**Mobile Food Pantry:** Audrey Bunch / Rosemary Heidbreder

The November 10th afternoon was windy, raining and cold to serve 128 families. Had fewer volunteers and they were shivering, they thought this was the worst weather to be outside volunteering. Some of the items given out: onions, radishes, tomatoes, Nutri System foods, assorted jelly packets, Capri Sun drinks, frozen steaks and pizza. The volunteers from the Lohman Lions Club were Alberta and Gary Zumwalt, and from St. Paul’s was Rosemary Heidbreder. Next mobile Food Truck December 8th at 1:30 to 3:30 P. M.

### **Fruendschaft Gruppe – Jeannette Fischer**

Because of the coronavirus our schedule has been altered and our gruppe has not been able to enjoy our regular monthly meetings. However, we will be responsible for decorating for Advent and Christmas as we have in the past. Our schedule is as follows:

- December 11, 1:30 we will put up the tree,
- January 4, 1:30 we will remove all decorations and store everything away.
- Luminaries will be placed on the hill December 24 as in the past.

Please mark your calendars for these dates and if you are available, we would appreciate your help. Thank you

## **ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

The meeting will be January 17, 2021 directly following worship service.

**The committee reports are due December 15, 2020.** That is less than two weeks away. We need your reports early so we can place them in order and create a booklet of information to send out to everyone, so it is very important that all reports arrive here on time for our secretary, Debbie to arrange and format them all together. You should be able to look over your reports each month of this year and summarize them for this end of year report.