

# Crossings

"Making known  
God's deeds  
among us."  
Isaiah 12:4

Volume 10 Issue 12

December 2015

## Pastor's Epistle

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

As I write this the world is reeling from several terrorist attacks, including Beirut, Nigeria and Paris, among others. Refugees by the 10's of thousands are risking life and limb, to flee from the violence. They flee to countries which do not have adequate facilities and resources to tend to their needs nor process their requests for asylum. The world is in an uproar and we react with fear and calls to close our borders to Syrians and others seeking freedom from fear and want. Please know that I also ask these same questions, "Where is Christ in all of this? What guidance does our Lord provide? As a Christian, how am I to respond?"

As we approach Christ the King Sunday followed by the seasons of Advent and Christmas, it may be wise to prayerfully consider who Jesus Christ is for the Christian. The King of the Universe was birthed in a cave-like stable to a poor Nazarene carpenter and a young teenage girl. They became refugees, because Herod was killing all boys 2yrs of age and younger (a terrorist act), and they fled to Egypt where they remained until Herod died. This poor boy child grew up in an orthodox religious practice under the very oppressive Roman rule used slavery, violence, and crucifixion as common methods to control the Jewish nation. He probably witnessed a couple of crucifixions during his upbringing as well as people being yanked out of their houses and sold into slavery never to return.

During his ministry he confronted not only the religious establishment of his time (the Temple), but also the Roman way of life. He did this by preaching a Gospel of love; a Gospel which showed that forgiveness is life-giving, life-renewing even in the midst of great oppression. He preached that the kingdom of God exists within people and calls for a reversal of how we engage oppression:

"If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful"

(Luke 6.32-36).

Again, when asked what are the greatest commandments, Jesus replied, " 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two rest all the law and the prophets". (Mat 22.37-40). You and I know that Jesus considers everyone, including our enemies, to be our neighbor (Luke 10.29-37).

## Our Mission Statement

*Called by Christ to love  
God & neighbor  
through **deepening prayer,**  
**broadening fellowship,**  
and **expanding worship.***

"In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loves us so much, we also ought to love one another."

I John 4:10-11

To show us this Godly love, Jesus went to the cross for all people who are enemies of God (all humanity, including "good Christian" and evildoers). From the cross, he looked out across the crowds mocking him, the centurions at his feet who cast lots for his clothes, as well as those folk who hammered the nails into his body on the cross, and he said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." (Luke 23.34).

This current time of anxiety and fear can cause us to react with our base instinct – to build walls, to let fear run amok, to choose to flee or stay and fight. But as people who have been baptized, we have been baptized into the death of Christ and already raised to new life *in* Christ (Romans 6). We live embodied by the Spirit of Christ for good works, which includes loving our enemies. As Christians we are called to love fearlessly, for "God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. . . There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because he first loved us" (1 John 4. 16b-19).

This Godly love is not a love of emotion, but of will. Loving our enemies in this way is not possible by our own efforts because we live in the tension of being simultaneously both saint and sinner. We belong to a God who does not leave us desolate, but empowers us to love by God's gracious Spirit. Let us prayerfully consider our response to this violence in the world. Ask God to help us to respond with compassion for the men, women, and children who risk everything to flee from the perpetrators of this evil. Pray for global and local leaders to act with thoughtful compassion to keep all people safe – the refugees and the countries who take them in.

Advent and Christmas remind us that God in Christ is coming soon. The God of the refugee is also the God of the evildoers, and the cross of Christ is rises in the midst of it all. May God bless us with the powerful Spirit of love, the words of hope, the compassion of Godly peace, and the ultimate joy of God's presence.

Walking with you along the WAY – Pr. Nancy



### **Salvation Army Bell Ringers!!**

St. Paul's will be ringing bells on **Saturday, December 5 from 9 am -6 pm** in one hour shifts at **Jim & Charlie's**. Still on spot to fill the 2-3 pm. Please sign-up if you are able.

Ninety percent (90%) of funds raised remain in Monroe County/Albia to be disbursed through the Albia Ministerial Emergency Assistance fund.



### **Building Faith Through Family Home Huddles** **(BF-T-FHH)**

On Sunday December 6th we will be having our monthly inter-generational missions project. This month we will be making ornaments for the residence of Brees Rest Home. We will start after worship about 10:30 am. Everyone can help and interact with our children in our congregation.



**St. Paul's Shut-ins:**  
Bob & Ruth Johnson

**Education/  
Prayer Team**

**RECENT PRAYERS**

Jenni Beckwith  
Carrie Bergland  
Mary Carder  
Gail Connerly  
Ray Hopkins  
Frank Hunter  
Linda Ulrich Johnson  
Loraine Jordan  
Martha McGlothen  
Karen Moon  
June Morrison  
Rosealee Rhodes  
Ella Teno

**(2014)**

Opal Bloomer  
Vickie Buckingham  
Addie Fausett  
Sharon Glenn  
Nick Griffin  
Gary Hollst  
Alyson Karl  
Richard McDonough  
Pat Mason  
Deloris Perry  
Gary Perry  
Amy Pottorff  
Dr. MARRIDEE RANDALL  
Carol (Keegle) Reed  
Devin Sinclair  
Paulette Williams



**Continuing Prayers**

Alex Amante  
Kevin Bunch  
Brantley Hemann  
Loren Lettington  
Laura Moore  
Rhonda Morgan  
Trisha Raven  
Bert Whitlock

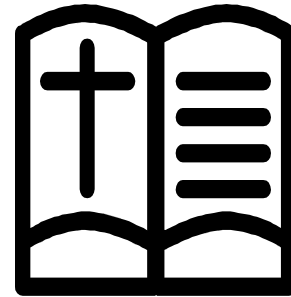
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**WELCA Bible Study**  
Special Day & Time: Thurs. Dec. 10 at  
2 pm (between soup lunch & supper)

**Slow Faith**

**Session 3:** Tempo giusto –means “play at  
the right speed”; in this session we will look  
to Jesus for a third way, one that keeps the  
Sabbath rest while working steadily for  
change in 3 of his parables.

**In Sympathy:** Our sympathy  
goes out to the family and friends of  
Josephine Lindberg who died on  
November 21. May they be  
comforted with the sure and certain  
hope of the resurrection.



**Christmas Program Practice**

Only 2 more practices before our program.

**NEW TIME:** 5:00—6:30 pm on Weds. Dec. 2 and Dec. 9 so we can practice before the  
Advent Service

**Christmas Program** will be on December 13 during Sunday Worship.



## Fellowship Team Ministries

### Sunday Brunch



**December 20**



#### Birthdays

1. Matthew Johnson
1. Curtis Kelley
1. Olivia Sherman
4. Bernice Butler
6. Cyndi Duea
10. Whitney Mae Thomas
11. Brandon Tomlin
12. Eric Duea
18. Brittany (Sparks) Flattery
25. Sharon Peterson
30. Karen Niebuhr
31. Broderick ( Brody) Thomas
31. Donna Post

**Special Thank you to**  
Marilyn Johnson, Colleen Putnam, Karen Niebuhr, Evelyn Sharpe & Marilyn Woods for serving at the Remembrance service and the Ecumenical Thanksgiving Worship.

### Senior Fellowship

**Pot-luck Luncheon:** On Wednesday, Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup> at 11:00 am we will have our Christmas potluck and gift exchange. Please bring a wrapped (about \$5.00) item or a white elephant item is okay.



### WELCA

**Annual Christmas Tea/Coffee Party:** Come join us on Sunday, Dec. 13 at 2:00 pm. Advent Angels will be revealed. Bring a wrapped gift (\$5-7.00) to exchange with those who did not participate in Advent Angels. All St. Paul's women are invited and you can bring a friend to join in the fun and fellowship. (No Cookie Exchange this year.)

**WELCA Bible Study: Thurs. Dec. 10 at 2 pm.**

(See more info on pg 3)

**Advent Angels:** See below.

**Soup Lunch and Supper** will be Dec. 10 this year. Lunch 11 am-1 pm and Supper from 5—7 pm.

Candy dipping workshop will be on Mon. Dec. 7 and candy packaging on Dec. 8 at 6 pm.

Please sign-up where ever you can help.

## *Birthdays & Anniversaries*

#### Baptismal Birthdays

3. Kaitlyn Spieler
20. Matthew Johnson
22. Cody Simmons
23. Dakota Kelley
23. Grayson Kelley
23. Stephanie Kelley
23. Brandon Tomlin
24. Bernice Butler



#### Anniversaries

17. Dan & Pat Johnson
25. Daryl & Bernice Butler
27. Greg & Jani Dorpinghaus
30. Terry & Anita Simmons

### Advent Angels



Remember your special person on Nov. 29, Dec. 6, Dec. 13 with a gift. We will open the gifts after Sun. worship. On the Dec. 13 at our Christmas Tea bring your final gift and reveal who's Advent Angel you are. Total budget for all 3 gifts is \$20.00.

## **Council**



**NEW DAY FOR COUNCIL MEETING:**  
Tuesday, December 15 at 6:30 pm

**Council Members needed:** If you would like to help make the decisions regarding church matters the council has an opening for you. Please let anyone on council know that you are interested.  
Council members are:

Kay Spieler, Pres.  
Gail Clouse, Vice Pres.  
Amanda Thomas, Secretary  
Lana Kaldenberg, Colleen Putnam, Curtis Kelley, Richard James, and Marilyn Woods.

### **Summary of November St. Paul's Council Minutes recorded by Curtis Kelley/Tuesday, 11/20/2015**

Meeting Opened by Kay Spieler @ 6:40 pm

Devotions by Pastor Nancy.

October 2015 minutes approved as corrected. Noted that during the Congregation meeting held on November 15, 2015, the repair for the furnace/AC was approved. So was the limited authorization recommendation allowing the Council to contract to repair any furnace and/or AC unit repair or replacement as required.

Treasurer's Report: Anita reported she had to borrow again to make expenses for bills and salaries. She borrowed from the Memorial Fund which now stands at \$758.16 as of the end of October, 2015. 2015 started out with \$3,00.00 in the black, and we are now in arrears (in the red) (\$3129.64). We need \$1800.00/week to make our expenses. Kay Spieler moved to approve the treasurer's report; Seconded by Richard James. Motion Carried.

Pastor's Report: Pastor talked about her recent conversation with a person on the St. Paul, Ottumwa, re-casting team. Council had discussion about yoking with St. Paul in Ottumwa. We are still awaiting anymore detail from them since their last meeting of the re-casting process was over 11/13-14.

Skipped the committee reports because the committees are still doing what was reported last month, and we need to allow time to discuss the budget for 2016.

Marilyn Woods moved to change the Annual Meeting date from Sunday, Jan 31, 2016, to Sunday, January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016. This date change is still constitutionally valid. Kay seconded – motion carried.

Pastor reported that the most recent water usage meter reading showed that the church had used 3000 gallons of water which is many gallons over the usual. The Albia city clerk had reported this via a phone call to the church. As of Council meeting, Anita had yet to receive an actual bill stating this. Asked Richard James to replace the toilet mechanism in the men's room and then we will check the water usage when the meter is read again.

Council discussed the 2016 proposed budget at length and made some more changes towards the Worship ministry, salaries, and miscellaneous ministry spending. Council will approve the final draft of the proposed budget at the December 2015 or the January 2016 Council meeting.

Richard James moves to accept the 2016 budget as amended. Curtis Kelley seconded. Motion carried.

Adjourned with the Lord's Prayer. Next Council meeting is December 15<sup>th</sup> @ 6:30 pm.

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**Note of thanks** to Ron Hohneke for replacing the toilet mechanism in the men's room.



## MISSIONS TASK FORCE

**Missions Meeting: Sunday Dec. 13 at 10:30 am.** We will be wrapping the family gifts and getting them ready for delivery.

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### ON-GOING Mission for the Assistant Emergency Office Needs:

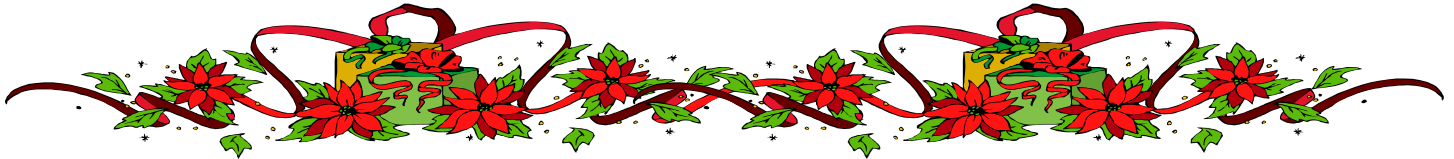
The shelves at our Ministerial Association Emergency Assistance Office are nearly empty. We have special need for items which cannot be obtained by food stamps:

Personal hygiene for men and women: deodorants, bath soap, body wash, toothpaste, shampoo, etc.

Paper products: bathroom tissue, etc.

Baby products: diapers, etc.

Cleaning items: **laundry detergent**, dish soap, any cleaning products.



### ADVENT MISSION: Poinsettia Project

Poinsettias are wonderful, but wouldn't it be great if they kept on living? That can happen by choosing a poinsettia that the Missions committee provides. Instead of or in addition to buying a real poinsettia plant, you can use those same funds to buy ducklings or chicks for a family in a third world country through the **ELCA Global Barnyard**; donate to **Smile Train** for surgery to fix a cleft lip and palate; or donate to **Habitat For Humanity** where they change lives by helping them build homes. (This part of the project will end on December 27th.) Here's how it works:

**PART A:** Each **small** poinsettia comes with a gift tag.

1. On the front of the tag, check one or more of the 3 selections offered. (If choosing more than one, tell us how much money goes to each entity).
2. Then at the bottom, write the name of the person for whom you are memorializing or honoring. Also write on the tag what you want us to purchase from the ELCA Global Barnyard, chicks, goat, etc.
3. Put the card and check in the envelope provided, and deposit them in the Mission's Christmas wrapped box. The missions committee will keep track of the money and send it to the appropriate entity per your instructions.
4. Return the poinsettia to the box/basket provided and we will decorate the Christmas tree with them. (or you can put the poinsettia on the tree yourself.)

**PART B:** Secret Adopt a Family for Christmas **Large Poinsettia mission.** We have two families wish/gift ideas that are on gift tags under the poinsettias. You have the options of giving a present for one or multiple members of either family. Please be sure to return the purchased gift with the tag attached. (*You may want to also attach a gift receipt in case of items not the right size.*)

The family gifts need to be wrapped and returned to the church no later than **Sunday, December 13th.** (*If you do not have time to wrap your item; we will do it after worship on the 13th.*)

Please sign the sheet on the clip board if you want to give your gift in Memory/or in Honor of someone.



## Worship Team Ministries



**Sunday Worship**  
9:00 am



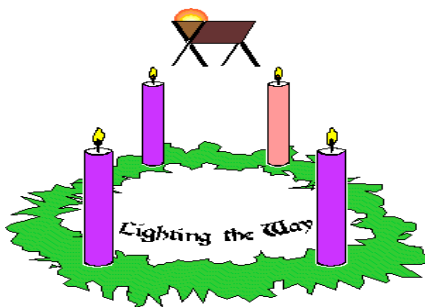
### **CHOIR**

Dec. 6 Practice 8:15 am  
Dec. 13 Practice 8:15 an  
Dec. 20 Practice 8:15 am  
Dec. 27 NO Practice

### Worship Servers

Altar Guild: Gloria Smallwood

<b><u>Dec. 6</u></b>	Worship Assistant:	Gail Clouse
	Ushers/Greeters:	Charlie & Gloria Smallwood
	Lector:	Gail Clouse
<b><u>Dec. 13</u></b>	Worship Assistant:	Marilyn Woods
	Ushers/Greeters:	Charlie & Gloria Smallwood
	Lector:	Gloria Smallwood
<b><u>Dec. 20</u></b>	Worship Assistant:	Marilyn Woods
	Ushers/Greeters:	Richard & Ruth James
	Lector:	Marilyn Woods
<b><u>Dec. 24</u></b> Christmas Eve	Worship Assistant:	Marilyn Woods
	Usher/Greeter:	????????
	Lector:	Marilyn Woods
<b><u>Dec. 27</u></b>	Worship Assistant:	Anita Simmons
	Usher/Greeter:	Richard & Ruth James
	Lector:	Marilyn Woods
<b><u>Dec. 31</u></b> New Years Eve Healing Worship	Worship Assistant:	????????
	Usher/Greeter:	????????
	Lector:	????????



### **ADVENT WORSHIP**

We will be having Advent worship on Wednesdays: Dec. 2, Dec. 9 and Dec. 16 at 6:30 pm. We will be using the Holden Evening Prayer service.

CHRISTMAS EVE



### **Candle Light Worship**

We will be celebrating Jesus' birth with worship on Thursday, December 24 at 7:00 pm. We will be using the Lessons and Carols Service.



**HEALING SERVICE**



### **New Year's Eve**

We will be having our annual Healing Worship on New Year's Eve, Thursday, December 31 at 7:00 pm.

This healing service will include the laying on of hands, anointing with oil, and individual prayers. All of us experience illness, mental fatigue, and/or spiritual disillusionment in our lives from time to time. Here is an opportunity to present yourself to the Lord and receive the healing God intends for you.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church  
335 North Eighth Street  
Albia, IA 52531

Phone: 641-932-7270  
Email: splalbia@iowatelecom.net  
Web Site—<http://www.splalbia.org>  
Office Hours: Tues.-Weds.-Thurs.  
9 am-2 pm

Place Mailing Label Here

Get your newsletter by e-mail and in color. Send your e-mail address to the church office.

**Links:**

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
The Southeast Iowa Synod of the ELCA

[www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org)  
[www.seiasynod.org](http://www.seiasynod.org)



**Radio Broadcast St. Paul's** worship service is broadcast each Sunday on  
KIIC (96.7 FM ) during their Sunday Son—Up programs starting at 8:00 am.



**WEB SITE:** Check out St. Paul's Web site at <http://www.splalbia.org>.

You will find our newsletters, calendar and recipe.

Please send any photos and recipes you would like to share and Martin Reed will add these to St. Paul's Web site.

**Blood Drive:** Albia Ministerial Assoc. is sponsoring a blood drive on Tues. Dec 1 at Trinity United Methodist Church. From 3– 7 pm. Call 800-452-1097 to schedule an appointment.

**Cookies needed for Albia Victorian Stroll:** for Dec. 5<sup>th</sup>. If you can help with baking cookies for the hospitality centers during Victorian Stroll; please bring them to the Albia Chamber office on Thurs. 12/3 from 9 am—3 pm and on by NOON on Friday, 12/4.

**Breakfast with Santa:** on Sat. Dec. 5 from 8:30 am – 11 am at the Trinity Life Center join the fun by having breakfast with Santa. This event is Sponsored by Monroe Co. Hospice.

**Bank's Christmas Open House:** On Friday, December 18th from 9 am—3 pm First Iowa State Bank and People's State Bank will host their Christmas Open Houses. First Iowa State guests that sign the guest book may designate the church of their choice and they will make a contribution of \$2.00 per signature. Coffee and cookies will be served at both banks.

**Lutheran Services of Iowa (LSI):** Thank you for your support; we want to share with you our news of great joy; we have exceeded our goal of \$12 million in gifts and commitments for the Celebrating Tradition, Building Futures Endowment Campaign we started in 2010. Our total reached \$13,576,659. This will make a big impact for Iowa children, families and adults for years to come. With this endowment LSI will be able to continue the work that was started 151 years ago, by the Lutheran founders, when they began caring for orphans of the Civil War.