

STPAULNOW

January 2025

St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church
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from Pr. Steve

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I have been asked to explain what Epiphany is in the church year, and what Epiphany celebrates. The word itself is not strictly religious. When someone has a sudden insight and grasps the essential meaning of something we say they had an epiphany. It usually happens in response to an event. For example, I narrowly escaped death from heart attack in 2006. Sitting alone in a room at Cleveland Clinic, looking out over the city, I realized I needed to reprioritize things and make some serious changes in my life.

That's an epiphany. The Epiphany refers to events in the life of Jesus that revealed him to be the Messiah Israel was waiting for, and also that he is God's promised savior for the whole world, including us Gentiles. One event in particular fits that definition—the coming of the Gentile Magi to worship the new-born King. There are other events during Jesus' life and ministry that do the same thing, but this is the first, and probably the most dramatic.

Here is how the Epiphany fits into the church year that developed over the first three-plus centuries after the birth of Jesus Christ. The year is divided into two half-years: 1) the half year of our Lord and 2) the half year of the Church. The first half year begins with Advent-Christmas. Advent is the four Sundays leading up to December 25, and is a time of preparation for his coming to us in Bethlehem—the incarnation, God becoming one of us. Christmas, obviously, is that coming, and consists of twelve days, counting Christmas Day. The next great event is Christ's manifestation as Son of God, King of kings—the Epiphany, January 6. Epiphany season continues until Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent, the forty-day season in which we remember Christ's suffering and death on our behalf. Then comes Easter, the celebration of his victory over death and darkness.

The half year of the Church begins fifty days after the resurrection, on the Day of Pentecost, when God sends the Holy Spirit to empower believers, building Christian character in them, and reaching the world with Good News through them.

So in our worship and teaching we tell the story of God's love and grace in Jesus Christ as we live through the themes of the church year.

Worship Services streamed live (Sundays, 10:00 AM); videos are posted at stpaulnow.org and on Facebook, usually by mid afternoon on Sundays.

Community Youth Group for grades 6-12

on the third Sunday each month, 6:30 to 8:00 PM, at the Tomorrow Center gym. Meetings feature music, devotions, snacks, and games. This is a cooperative community ministry supported by Cardington Church of the Nazarene, Community Methodist Church, and our congregation. Encourage your young people to drop in and check it out.

Next meeting: Sunday, January 19, 6:30 PM

Tomorrow Center Gymnasium

3700 County Road 168, Cardington 43315

Cardington Food Pantry Needs

January: Kleenex, toilet tissue, air freshener

Featured donations for the months ahead:

February: Pancake mix & syrup, biscuit mix

March: Evaporated, sweet, or powdered milk

All months: cereal, flour, meals in a can (e.g., spaghetti, beef stew), soup, white and brown sugar, salt/pepper.

Monetary donations can also be mailed to Cardington Food Pantry, P.O. Box 168, Cardington OH 43315.

Happy January Birthday

1 Casey Ebert	15 Matt McLaughlin	22 Bob Davis
6 Claire Brandyberry	16 Kim Westbrook	23 Trent Ebert
Mason Kidwell	17 Vanessa Radel	26 Riley Kilgore
Margie Landon	18 Marie Long	Brennan McLaughlin
8 Allison Minkos	19 Toni Binkley	28 Sharon Walker
10 Lane Kanagy	David Davis	29 Austin Radel
11 Kristi Bulkowski	Bob Dutt Jr.	31 Terri Roberts
14 Kim Burns	20 Natalie Radel	
Tim Maceyko	21 Tina Radel	

Please let us know if we miss anyone.

Happy New Year!

December Council meeting

Regular meeting, December 10, 6:30 PM

Present: Marie Christiano (Chair), Thomas Bathke (Vice Chair), Sondra Carey (Secretary), Terry Roberts (Treasurer), Pastor Steve Dennis, Mary Kay Disterdick, Patty Kirk, Kenneth Smith. Newly elected 2025 Council members were also present as guests: Howard Radel, Steve Kirk, Terri Roberts

Council took the following actions:

- Approved the November reports of the Treasurer and Secretary, and received the Pastor's report;
- Reviewed the updated schedule of events for the Christmas season.

The Women's Morning Bible Study starts Wednesday, January 8, 10:00 A.M., for a twelve-week study on *The Ten Commandments*.

Treasurer's Report for November 2024

FUNDS	BALANCE 10/31/2024	INCOME November	EXPENSES November	BALANCE 11/30/2024
General Fund	\$13,539.67	\$ 7,604.62	\$11,063.48	\$10,080.81
Committed Funds				
Benevolence Fund	\$4,331.58	\$ 168.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 4,499.58
Richard Renz Fund	\$ 3,173.46	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 3,173.46
Funeral Fund	\$ 1,026.95	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 1,026.95
Christian Education Fund	\$ 194.26	\$ 100.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 294.26
Memorial Fund	\$ 8,179.31	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 8,179.31
Building Fund	\$ 8,657.52	\$ 695.00	\$ 296.02	\$ 9,056.50
Total Committed Funds	\$25,563.08	\$ 963.00	\$ 296.02	\$26,230.06
Total Funds (General + Committed)	\$39,102.75	\$ 8,567.62	\$11,359.50	\$36,310.87

Building Fund Expense: Replaced 4 fire extinguishers (\$296.02)

Income: Nov 3, \$50 placed in Benevolence for Shoeboxes; Nov 24, \$50 placed in Benevolence for Shoeboxes; Nov 24, \$18 placed in Benevolence for Thanksgiving

Christmas was a busy, busy time at St. Paul



The manger scene, which opened Christmas in Cardington, happened "on a cold winter's night that was so deep"—the coldest day-to-date in the area.



On Saturday, December 21st, just an hour and 20 minutes B-4 the official onset of winter, 12 carolers gathered at the church before hitting the road to bless St. Paul's shut-ins with the Christmas message in song and a container of homemade goodies.

His Kids Christmas party



After welcoming the kids and getting them settled with name tags, a video titled *The Star*, depicting the birth of Jesus, was enjoyed by both the kids and volunteers. Craft time is always a big hit, even tho' some of the younger kids may need a little bit of assistance. Naturally, lunch is always looked forward to. The entire morning is one filled with teaching moments, fun, laughter, and filled tummy's. Of course, the whole shebang could never happen without the help of volunteers: planning and organizing the party, greeting and getting the kids settled in, assisting with the crafts, and serving the lunch. So, a hearty ho-ho-ho hats off to Toni Binkley, Norma Dennis, Judy Graham, Sondra Carey, Marie Christiano, and Donna Bathke.