

DECEMBER

2015

St. Paul's News

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There's a chill in the air, the trees are bare, and we've even begun to see some snow. Your homes may already contain a real or fake douglas fir tree (which is not actually a true fir tree as its cones hang downward! Your random knowledge for the day) and our sanctuary is already blue, the color of Advent. All of these signs point to one truth, that Christmas is almost here. Which is exciting!

...Unless it's not.

Amidst all the hubbub of the holidays, the mirth, carols, pine scented candles and pictures with Santa, the pain of many is covered and forgotten. Christmas and its season does not always contain fond reminiscences, happy memories of days gone by. Christmas is not always a time anticipated, but sometimes dreaded.



Dreaded for painful memories of family dinners where mom or dad or both are likely to get drunk, as everyday, and ruin Christmas. Dreaded for memories of beatings and abuse. Dreaded for memories of the sins of our past. Dreaded for memories of Christmas' past and present, spent alone, or abandoned, or depressed, or riddled with anxiety. Dreaded for the angst that comes with gathering with a broken, fractured family, or a family with missing members- missing members whether through death, or their own decision to distance themselves from those that love them. Christmas is sometimes dreaded by persons for the very reasons you are anticipating it.

Or maybe you're one of those people. Maybe Christmas is not "the most wonderful time of the year", but the worst.

Which is exactly the reason that Jesus came; to carry each horrible Christmas on His shoulders, and suffer them with you. You are not alone with your pain, depression, addiction, or anger. You are not alone in your yuletide angst. You are not alone.

The infant Jesus, even lying in a manger, is not only "the reason for the season", which all too often sounds painfully trite, but He is the reason for hope especially in a dark and despairing season.

As a family of faith, we can't forget those who aren't celebrating, but especially now must seek them out and suffer alongside them. We must pursue reconciliation with our broken families, even if that means no longer being "right". Even as we already do, we can especially now suffer with those who suffer, mourn with those who mourn, and rejoice with those who rejoice.

Yours always in mourning, suffering, and rejoicing in Jesus,

Pastor

Congregational Meeting



**CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
SUNDAY DECEMBER 18th
AFTER WORSHIP.**

The budget for 2017 will be discussed as well as other exciting things for St. Paul's. Please stay for a short time after worship to give your input!!



Please plan to stay for a short while after worship on Sunday, December 11 to trim the beautiful Christmas tree in the sanctuary. Coffee Hour will be up in the church after worship so we can all help!



Altar Flowers

The new altar flower chart for 2017 has been posted in the Narthax. Please take a moment and sign up for the Sunday(s) that you would like to place flowers on the altar and the dedication for the bulletin. Thanks for your help!! Cost of the flowers is \$25

COFFEE HOUR SIGN UP



The sign up sheet for Coffee Hour 2017 is on the bulletin board in Luther Hall. Please sign up for at few Sundays during the coming year.



Be patient...
until the coming of the Lord.

JAMES 5:7

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SCHEDULE
—DECEMBER 24th—
5:30 PM—FAMILY CANDLELIGHT WORSHIP

—DECEMBER 25th—
9:30 AM CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP

**Shelter
Dinners**



Shelter Dinners: Many thanks to everyone who made food for the shelter dinner on December 6th. Special thanks to Dave McMullen for coordinating the event!

The next dinner is scheduled for *Tuesday, January 3, 2017*. A sign up sheet is on the piano in Luther Hall if you can help prepare a side dish or dessert for the meal, or contact Sheryl Baum, who has volunteered to coordinate that meal.

Coordinators are still needed for these future dates: January 312, February 28, and March 28.

HELP THE HOMELESS



CLUSTER COLLECTION

The Schuyler Inn, located in Menands is an emergency housing shelter for families. Many of the residents are there as a result of severe financial difficulties or natural disasters, such as fire or flood. They often arrive with nothing more than the clothes they are wearing. Their need is great.

During January and February the Cluster churches will collect:

- Packages of diapers
- Baby wipes
- Diaper rash ointment
- Socks for adults.

Items may be left in the basket in the back of the church.

CANCELLATIONS AND CLOSINGS



If the weather is bad, check with TV and radio stations for cancellations and closures at St. Paul's. There will be notification on Capital News 9, channels 6,10,13, WXXA, and radio stations FLY92, WGY,WRVE,B-95.5



*Our Wishes to you is for a
blessed Christmas
And a Happy and Healthy
New Year*



**PORTALS OF PRAYER FOR
JANUARY—MARCH ARE
AVAILABLE IN THE BACK OF
THE CHURCH OR CALL THE
CHURCH OFFICE FOR A COPY.**

- 1. EJAZ ABID
- 5. Kennedy Grace Foley
Cassidy Olivia Foley
- 7. ALAN DAVID ALEXANDER
- 10. OLGA MARTINEZ
- 12. BRITT FOLEY
- RAHEELA WASEEM
- 15. NIMMY DAVID
ROBERT OESER
- 20. ELI BAUM
- 26. ANNE VAN ACKER
- 27. TORRE ROSENZWEIG
NOOR JAVED
- 28. DAVID ALEXANDER
- 30. RAIGEN LYNCH



ELDER

**ALAN
ALEXANDER**

DATE	FLOWERS	SERVICE STEWARD	Communion Assistant	ALTAR COMMITTEE	Coffee Hour
12/4	Bailey and Alex Alexander in honor of Davy's birthday	Martin Kahler	Diane Kingston	Muriel Brady and Linda Calamaras	The Alexanders
12/11		Martin Kahler	Diane Kingston		
12/18	Anne and Tom Ragonin in memory of loved ones	Tom Calamaras	Lori Seim	Frances Van Acker, Joan Aldi, Sue Sheldon	Dina Lee and Martha Kratz
12/25	Alan and Julie Alexander in honor of Alex's 80th birthday.	Tom Calamaras	Lori Seim		