



# THE SPECTRUM

The Newsletter of St. Paul-Reformation Lutheran Church

JANUARY  
2023

**Sunday Liturgies**  
8:00 and 10:30 a.m.

**Livestream video** via  
SPR's FB page or look  
in your e-mail on  
Sunday mornings.

**Sunday School and  
Adult Forum**  
9:10 a.m.

**Confirmation,**  
9:30 a.m.

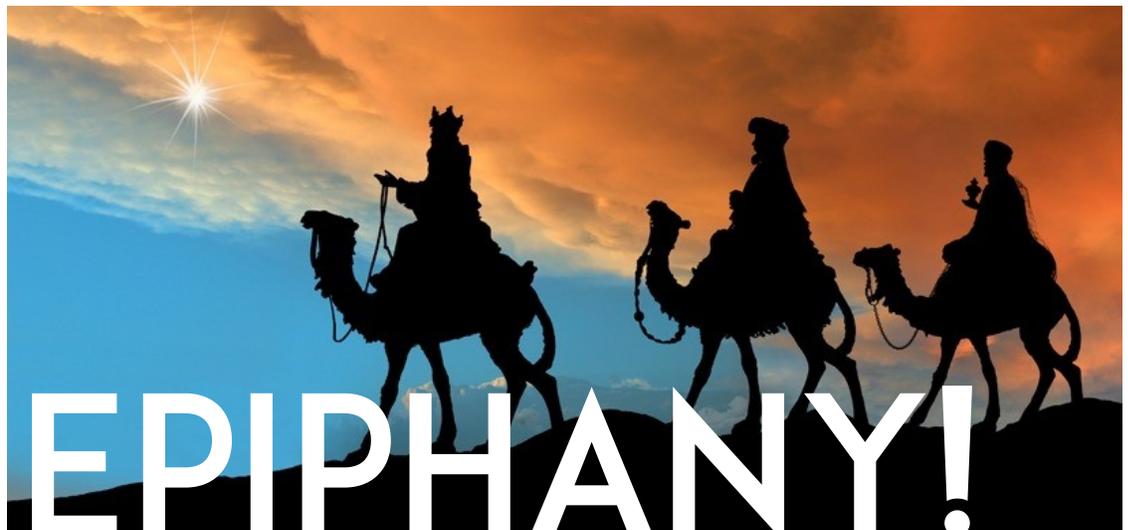
**Nursery**  
Kids with Parents  
10:15 a.m.

**Visit us on the web!**  
[www.stpaulref.org](http://www.stpaulref.org)

St. Paul-Reformation  
is a congregation of  
the Evangelical  
Lutheran Church in  
America (ELCA).

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The Spectrum items, articles and columns need to be to the Parish Office by the 12th of the month. The Spectrum goes to the printer on the 15th of the month, and this date is hard and fast. Articles received after the 12th may or may not be included in the newsletter.



**Join us as the ELCA celebrates the arrival of the Magi on January 6!**

**EPIPHANY** + Lutherans in the Twin Cities are delighted to welcome our Presiding Bishop, Elizabeth Eaton, who will preach and preside at a city-wide liturgy for Epiphany that will be held at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church (700 Snelling Avenue) on Friday, January 6 at 7:00 p.m. **Please note the change: SPR will not host its own Epiphany liturgy this year.**

## **ONE LITURGY ON JANUARY 1**

A reminder that there will be one liturgy on Sunday, January 1 at 10:30 a.m. We are happy to welcome SPR's own Pr. Meredith McGrath to preach and preside for Christmas I.

## **BUDGET Q&A WITH THE PARISH COUNCIL**

**Sunday, January 22 at 12:00 noon hybrid Zoom and in person** + Join us as we do a walk-through of the budget in preparation for SPR's Annual Meeting. We have found that a Q&A open to all the week before greatly speeds the business meeting the following week. If you like crunching numbers, this is for you! Watch the Friday e-mails for a Zoom link to this time together.



**FOR THE LAST WEEK OR SO.** St. Paul-Reformation has played host to the City of St. Paul's Warming Shelter for youth and families. After reaching out to various faith communities in our City, SPR was one of the first to say "yes, of course" to this "ask" for youth and families who otherwise would be living in their cars on cold Minnesota winter nights. For the past week, these folk have been using our basement, and evidence of their presence has been virtually null; everything has been cleaned up, put away, in order, and one would hardly know that they had been here.

As I write to you, St. Paul is currently working with other locations to serve as sites in this pilot program, one that has received significant government funding. And, while we were happy to open up (and will be happy again to do so in the future), several things struck me that required a double-take on how we view homelessness in our City and State, and how we address that as a community of faith.

First, this program—though well-intentioned—is the first year that St. Paul has provided such a service to those in need. Without this government funding, no shelters would have been able to open since to do so requires at least a minimum level of funding. Problem? Minnesota has winter every year, and this is certainly not the first (nor the last) year that those in our midst will be cold. Why is this effort just happening now?

Secondly, programs that address direct services for those living in homelessness are often messy, requiring a certain amount of flexibility. In this regard, the City has done well, though it often surprises people how—generally—such efforts involve building the airplane as it is taking off. The point is that institutions that do such work (including us) need to remain flexible and nimble

when it comes to the needs that are being met. It is not a matter of *if* there will be headaches, but *when*. Homeless populations are often dealing with other factors that frustrate caregivers: mental illness, bad choices, and sometimes drug use mark the way.



*“The Church is called to these same virtues too, and we don’t show the love of God to people ‘if they deserve it...’”*

So what? Does a person deserve to be warm only if they are perfect, or do not require significant effort or services? No, for to say so is a rejection of the Christian theology of human dignity. Each person—no matter how difficult—bears the image of the creative God, and each is called to both compassion and accountability. The Church is called to these same virtues too, and we don't show the love of God to people "if they deserve it" because God does not base the love that we receive on this criteria. We love because Jesus told us to and because he's the boss. Period.

Last, is it good, entirely, that we saw no sign of those who were using our space? I don't want anyone destroying things, but it also strikes me that one of the great challenges of homelessness in our midst is that we don't see it. Just as homeless individuals are invisible outside these walls, so we sometimes temper our compassion with a requirement that they be invisible within these walls, too. "There must be no signs of your use of this space" is respectful, but also dismissive of those who—in many ways—are invisible. We must always balance the care we take of our building with the care that we provide to those who need it most. People are more important than buildings, and "The Church" is not a structure, it is the people *in* it, including a cold family who is seeking shelter.

Does that sound familiar during this Christmas/Epiphany? Stay tuned to learn more...this story is just unfolding.

Peace, Pr. Patrick H. Shebeck



### FROM THE CANTOR

One of my favorite hymn writers is Sylvia Dunstan, who was ordained in the United Church of Canada (not the same as the UCC in the United States). She served as a parish minister and a prison chaplain. She was known as a gifted writer and lover of liturgy before her untimely death at age 38 of liver cancer. She has a marvelous knack for being able to express profound theological ideas through simple, yet poetic language. Her hymn "Down Galilee's Slow Roadways" tells of the baptism of Jesus, in which he is first described as a stranger traveling from Nazareth to Jordan. In fact, Jesus is such a stranger that his name never appears in this hymn! He's just as anonymous as the "soldier, scribe, and slave," a wonderfully alliterative list of people who might also have sought baptism by John.

But unlike the others who went into the water that day, Jesus' baptism was accompanied by the miraculous sign of the heavens being opened and the Holy Spirit descending like a dove. The third stanza connects our journey to the life of Jesus. Just as his life led up to his baptism, so has our life led us to this present moment. Our baptism is like that of Jesus; through it we are united with Jesus and therefore are also named beloved children of God.

A new calendar year seems like a good time to ponder Martin Luther's explanation of baptism: "It signifies that the old person in us with all sins and evil desires is to be drowned and die through daily sorrow for sin and through repentance, and on the other hand that daily a new person is to come forth and rise up to live before God in righteousness and purity forever... As Paul says in Romans 6, 'We have been buried with Christ by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.'" This New Year, may you be strengthened by your baptism to abundant new life in Christ!

*Down Galilee's slow roadways a stranger traveled on  
from Nazareth to Jordan to be baptized by John.  
He went down to the waters like soldier, scribe, and  
slave,  
but there within the river the sign was birth and  
grave.*

*Arising from the river he saw the heavens torn;  
it seemed the sky so open revealed the Spirit's form.  
The holy dove descended amid a glorious voice:  
"You are my own beloved, my child, my heart, my  
choice."*

*We too have found a roadway; it led us to this place.  
We all have had to travel in search of hope and  
grace.  
But now beside this water again a voice is heard.  
"You are my own, my chosen, beloved of your Lord."*

Text: Sylvia G. Dunstan, 1955–1993

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+ Sr. Stacie Lightner

### FROM THE VICAR



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## MLK BREAKFAST

**Monday, January 16t**

Tickets must be purchased to attend at the Convention Center or to receive link to view the event.

There will be no satellite in person locations. The Keynote Speaker is yet to be announced. Link to the registration webpage will be in the weekly email.

## ANNUAL MEETING

**Sunday, January 29**

SPR's Annual Meeting will take place on Sunday, January 29th at 12:30 p.m. All Confirmed members may vote, and the Annual Report will be available the week before. You can join this meeting via Zoom or in person; please watch for a link in your e-mail. Similarly, the Annual Report will be available online if you would like to view it that way. In preparation for this meeting, we invite you to the Budget Q & A with the Parish Council the Sunday before (see first page). This will speed along our time together and help us to work efficiently. Potluck lunch to follow the meeting.

## EL SALVADOR SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS

The School year begins in January in El Salvador and students at our sister church in Nahualapa are hoping to receive a scholarship to help them continue their education for the year. THANK YOU to those who have already contributed!. For those who would still like to sponsor a student you can contribute in one of two ways:

- 1) Please contribute by credit card online by choosing "Nahualapa Scholarships" at [stpaulref.org/donate](http://stpaulref.org/donate). If you do choose to use the online service, we kindly request that you also choose the optional donation of 2.65% to help offset the processing fee.
- 2) Make your check out to St. Paul-Reformation with "ES scholarship" in the memo line and mail to the church or drop in the coppering plate on Sunday.



**Above:** St. Paul-Reformation was a very busy place in December! Here, Leo Treadway prepares to present St. Nicholas Day, an annual treat and highlight of the Advent season! **Right:** In addition to the wonderful concert presented by Central High School, many gathered together in Tidemann Hall for fellowship (and goodies) at SPR's Advent Tea.

**ADULT FORUM** is at 9:10 a.m. in Tidemann Hall. We have an incredible line up of speakers. Join us to learn, discern and discuss. A slate of interesting topics is on deck for January, we hope you can join us (*Please note: Adult Forum returns on Sunday, January 15*):



**Sunday, January 15: Galatians: Luther's SECOND Favorite Book** + Dr. John Dunne, Bethel University. John Dunne holds a PhD in New Testament and is an expert on the letters of Paul. Galatians was definitively written by Paul, and Luther called it his "second wife." What was so important about Galatians, and why does it remain pivotal for Lutherans today?

**Sunday, January 22: Budget Check-In With the SPR Parish Council** + If dissecting the budget is your thing, then we invite you to join us as we take a deep dive into SPR's projected 2023 budget. You can ask all the questions you want, crunch all the numbers you want, and prepare for our Annual Meeting the following week. Go wild!



**Sunday, January 29: The Rondo Community Land Trust** + Mikeya Griffin + Proposals have been made for a land-bridge to span 94, restoring some of what was lost in St. Paul's Rondo neighborhood. What do these proposals look like and what do they hope to accomplish? Mikeya Griffin serves as the Executive Director of the Rondo Community Land Trust. You can learn more at [rondoctl.org](http://rondoctl.org).

## BIRTHDAYS

- 02 Anne Halgerson
- 04 Don Colbert
- 08 Elizabeth Adedigba, Gary Sande
- 09 Nancy Seleen, Oliver Yang
- 10 Jeannie Entenza, Ani Zlimen
- 11 Sandy Iverson
- 13 Jon Stevens
- 19 Al Ortweig
- 21 Juan Ramirez
- 23 Louise Beckman, Tom Dunn
- 24 Rich Gehrman
- 25 Judi Fluger, Eldora Pearson, Chris Thomforde
- 27 Nadia Ramire
- 30 Kris Stevens
- 31 Alma Maki

## ANNIVERSARIES

- 17 Karen and Scott Hanson

## HEALTH PROFESSIONALS' GROUP

The Health Professionals Group met in mid-October to review current data and trends. Based on this review we are recommending the following:

- **Masks are now encouraged but not required** for all Church activities. Please make a decision that is good for you while honoring the choices of others. We're still all in this together!
- If you are feeling ill or under the weather, please stay home and join us via livestream.
- We continue to strongly urge you to get vaccinated, boosted, and take all necessary precautions to remain safe and smart.

## SUNDAY FUNDAY—LET'S GO SLEDDING

Sunday School kids and their families will go sledding on January 22. Time and the perfect sledding hill to be determined.

**BIBLE MATTERS VIA ZOOM** Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom. Please join us for this time of study, fellowship, and learning as we look forward to the coming week's lectionary texts. Watch for the link in the weekly email or the Bible Matters email.

## JANUARY MINISTRY SCHEDULE

We are so thankful for all the volunteers who help make Sunday morning 10:30 a.m. service “run.”

### January 1, The First Sunday of Christmas

Victoria Smith, Elizabeth Callen *Asst Ministers*  
Alyn Bedford, Ellis Bedford, *Lectors*  
Lillie Eiken, *Acolyte* Dawn Klesk, *Cantor*  
Hilary and Roman Hund,  
Jan Swenson, Kay Pekel, *Greeters/Ushers*  
John Johnson, Diane Aase, *Coffee/Treats*

### January 8, The Baptism of Our Lord

Jamie Hocmuth, Elizabeth Callen, *Asst Ministers*  
Sunday School Students, *Lectors*  
Sebastian Badilla, *Acolyte* Patrick Coleman, *Cantor*  
Deanna Sande, Anne and Jim Halgerson,  
Cheri Gohr, *Greeters/Ushers*  
Anne and Jim Halgerson, *Coffee/Treats*

### January 15 Second Sunday after Epiphany

Bonnie Olson, Victoria Smith, *Asst Ministers*  
Susan Martyn, Jamie Block, *Lectors*  
Tanner Rouillard-Horne, *Acolyte*  
Dawn Klesk, *Cantor*  
Eldora Pearson, Kay Pekel,  
Tamika Ramirez, Jan Swenson *Greeters/Ushers*  
Deb Horne, Tamika Ramirez, *Coffee/Treats*

### January 22, Third Sunday after Epiphany

Jessa Anderson-Reitz, Luke Hanson, *Asst Ministers*  
Margaret Schuster, Bonnie Olson, *Lectors*  
Ellis Bedford,, *Acolyte* Patrick Coleman, *Cantor*  
Roman and Hilary Hund, Margaret Schuster,  
Joe Voss, *Greeters/Ushers*  
Bonnie Olson, Margaret Schuster, *Coffee/Treats*

### January 29, Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Victoria Smith, Elizabeth Callen, *Asst Ministers*  
Eldora Pearson, Tom Webbs, *Lectors*  
Daniel Adedigba, *Acolyte*  
Jim Bowen, *Cantor*  
Kristen Damberg, Anthony Hedlund,  
Jim McGowan, Tamika Ramirez, *Greeters/Ushers*  
Eldora Pearson, Tom Webb, *Coffee/Treats*

## COUNCIL CORNER

The Parish Council met for its Annual Christmas gathering on Tuesday, December 13th. Because this was essentially a Christmas gathering, we only took action on a small list of items:

- The Parish Council signed the final agreement with American Tower to close on the sale of our Cell-Tower Agreement. Well done to all who helped in this process, especially John Rent and Alyn Bedford who shepherded this process to a successful conclusion.
- Recommended a bylaw change for the Parish Constitution that adjusts the number required for a quorum; this will be proposed to the Congregation for approval at our Annual Meeting.
- Received an update on Stewardship information; members of the Parish Council will be contacting those who have not yet pledged.



**Above:** SPR's Sunday School led us in welcoming St. Nicholas on Sunday, December 10. A special thanks to Eldora Pearson and Sarah Matala who worked with our little ones! The kiddos sang again on Christmas Eve...stay tuned for photos!

**HOLY EUCHARIST LIVESTREAM** + SPR's Sunday Eucharist is livestreamed every Sunday at 9:30 a.m. via SPR's Facebook page, or at [www.stpaulref.online.church](http://www.stpaulref.online.church). Similarly, SPR now has a YouTube channel where services are archived. Simply go to YouTube and search “St. Paul-Reformation Lutheran Church.”

**QUILTING for Charity** Join us on **Saturday January 7 at 10:00 a.m.** You can sew, arrange blocks, iron, tie layers together, cut fabric! Work on your own projects. Join in on the fun! Bring a snack to share. Coffee provided. Contact Gwen Peyton at [gwenpeyton5@gmail.com](mailto:gwenpeyton5@gmail.com).

**MEALS MINISTRY!** + Once a month, SPR members help each other by preparing and delivering meals for members who may find it challenging to always have a home-cooked meal. Meals cooked in the church kitchen at **9:00 a.m. on Saturday January 21.** Volunteers needed; if you can chop, cook, package, measure or just like to socialize, please join us. The alley door will be open. Your contributions for this ministry are greatly appreciated. For more information please contact Gwen Peyton, [gwenpeyton5@gmail.com](mailto:gwenpeyton5@gmail.com).

**BREAKFAST CLUB** will be on hiatus in January. **Join us on February 5** at the Louisiana Café on Selby Ave. All are welcome to join this time of fellowship.



**Above:** SPR completed a four-week study on human trafficking. Here, Lutheran Social Service's Joy McElroy leads our capstone session.

**BUILDING UPDATE** The Tuesday Crew continues working on multiple repair, improvement and winterizing projects needed around the building. Winterizing items: sealing doors and windows, especially the stained glass windows in Tidemann Hall and the main wooden doors. Other projects: determining and resolving issues with breakers popping in the Conservatory Studios and with brightness of lights on the east side of the building. As well as determining a professional will need to be brought in to repair the hanging line for the sanctuary hoop. And so much more. Thanks to all who volunteer to keep this building and the spaces inside in condition to use and rent out.



AT MITCHELL HAMLINE SCHOOL OF LAW

protect. prevent. prosecute. remember.

## SPR TO HOST EXHIBIT ON GENOCIDE

**January 22-31**

St. Paul-Reformation will host an exhibit from World Without Genocide, an organization based at Hamline-Mitchell School of Law that works to end genocide in our world. Hosted in conjunction with the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, the short exhibit will help viewers to learn more about this moral scandal. Stop by the Heritage Room in the Lower Auditorium to have a view and learn more.

## HAVE YOU RETURNED YOUR 2023 PLEDGE CARD?

If not, not to worry! There are two ways you can do it:

- 1.) Return the **pledge form/paper** pledge card via the mail;
- 2.) **Make your commitment online** using the link in the Friday e-mail, via our website, or on SPR's Facebook Page. *Thank you in advance!*

**DONATE TO SPR USING YOUR SMARTPHONE!** *A great way to donate whether you are at church or out and about!* Now you can give from anywhere in the world! It's fast, easy, and secure. Search your app-finder for **"GivePlusChurch,"** download it, click "sign up," and follow the instructions. You can donate to either the Good Samaritan Fund or the Parish General fund (in addition to your regular pledge). Give it a try! **Thanks to all who are using this quick and easy way to donate!**

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## PARTING SHOT



**Above:** Pastor Jonathan Nerdig was ordained to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at St. Paul-Reformation, December 3.