

From: newsletters@faithlife.com,
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Advent Newsletter

Advent Wednesday Schedule

Due to the flood restoration at St. Paul, our Advent Mid-week services will be held jointly at First Lutheran, beginning Wednesday, December 1st. We will observe the following schedule:

- **5:00 pm** Individual Confession and Absolution
- **5:30 pm** Soup Supper
- **6:15 pm** Service of Evening Prayer
- **7:00 pm** Bible Study

Christmas Services

Christmas Eve, December 24 (Friday):

- **5:30 pm** St. Paul - Candlelight Service
- **7:30 pm** First Lutheran - Candlelight Service

Christmas Day, December 25 (Saturday):

- **10:00 am** First Lutheran - Divine Service

Individual Confession & Absolution

- *How does it work?* Pastor will be sitting near the altar rail to hear confessions between 5:00 and 5:30 each Wednesday of Advent. Those who desire to make confession may enter the sanctuary (one at a time) and kneel at the

altar rail. Use the hymnal that is provided and simply say the words that are written (p. 292).

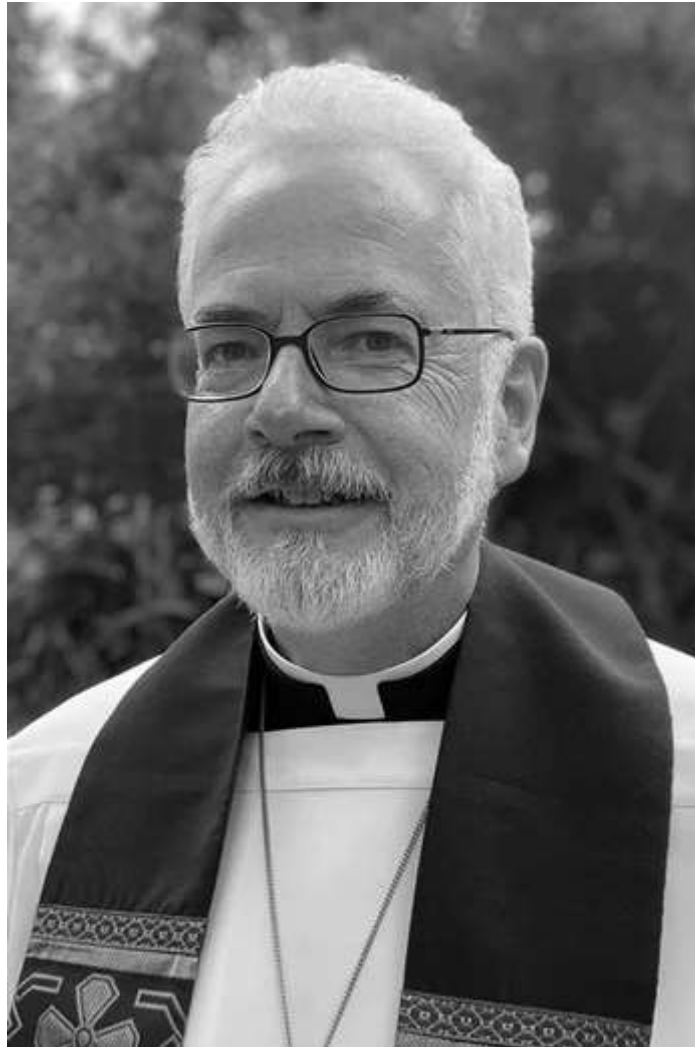
- *What sins should I confess?* There is no need, nor would it be possible, to confess every last sin. Instead, you may speak the general confession provided in the hymnal. However, if you are troubled by a particular sin, you may confess it also.
 - *What if people see me?* Then they will know that you are a Christian. This is private confession, not “secret” confession. Nothing that you confess will ever be repeated, but no Christian ought to be ashamed of being seen going to confession. This is the very definition of what a Christian is: one who cultivates the habit of receiving forgiveness.
 - *How often should I go to confession?* There is no law regarding when Christians should go to confession. Instead, we are free to avail ourselves of this blessed remedy for the troubled conscience as often as necessary. If you have never gone to confession before as a Lutheran, perhaps considering going once during the penitential season of Advent.
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Baptism of Wazim Doris



Wazim Doris is a 16-year-old high school student from the Bronx who recently converted from Islam to Christianity. Wazim was baptized at First Lutheran on Reformation Day, October 31st, 2021. He rides the train every Sunday to come to church and is eagerly studying the faith in preparation for receiving his first Communion.

Visist from the Rev. Roger James



Last Wednesday we were privileged to have Pastor Roger James, assistant to the Secretary General of the International Lutheran Council, give a presentation on the work of our partner churches throughout the world.

The Missouri Synod is not the only faithful church in the world. We are partnered with over sixty Lutheran bodies, some of which are larger (though poorer) than the LCMS.

Pastor James explained how the International Lutheran Council (ILC) faces challenges from the much larger organization of so-called Lutheran churches that have abandoned the Word of God, the Lutheran World Federation (LWF).

The LWF has a yearly budget of \$170 million, \$25 million of which comes from the UN. In comparison, our organization, the ILC, has a yearly budget of \$500,000. "It is not a fair fight," Pastor James said, "because we have the Word of God."

To learn more about the International Lutheran Council (ILC), please visit <https://ilc-online.org/>.

Flood Restoration

Dear Friends,

While there is still sizable work ahead, much repair work to the parsonage and lower level of the church has been accomplished. We'd like to give you an update on where we stand with the restoration work, and related finances.

In terms of finances, we applied for, and received, a \$10,000 grant from the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and have received many donations from individuals. It is interesting to note that a number of the donations have come from individuals who have no connection to the congregation, but were compelled to donate after reading about our story in the news. Also, our “sister” SELC congregation Redeemer Lutheran Church of Manchester, NJ, sent a gift of \$600, and “sister” New England District congregation St. Peter Lutheran Church in Norwalk gave a generous donation of \$7,720. In addition to the LCMS grant, we have received a total of \$16,123 in donations. We are blessed!

We’ve met with Pastor Dan Lepley, the SELC district’s representative for the Lutheran Church Extension Fund, and upon approval from the congregation, filed paperwork to receive a loan of \$150,000. The loan is interest free for one year, and then will have an approximate interest rate of 2% for an additional four years. Jack Dobrucky, President of the congregation, and Tom Dianis, Treasurer, are meeting with our attorney to finalize the receipt of the loan next week.

Currently, FEMA is only offering assistance to individuals and business owners effected by Hurricane Ida. The public assistance programs for Fairfield County have not yet been approved, and are under review by FEMA. Non-profit agencies will become eligible for grants upon that approval. We will update you all if and when that approval is granted.

Our furnace has been repaired and we are currently working on estimates for restoring the kitchen. A tremendous amount of work has been done by the members of the Hispanic congregation, Iglesia Casa de Alfarero. We are grateful to Pastor Ventura and his parishioners for their dedication to most notably restoring the fellowship hall and parsonage.

We will keep the congregation updated on the repair work, and as more information becomes available, will report on detailed finances. Thank you to everyone who has offered their time, talent, and treasure! Please reach out to a member of the Executive Board with questions.

In His service,

The Executive Board of St. Paul Lutheran Church



By St. Paul and First Lutheran

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