



St. Paul's  
**EPISTLE**

December 2019

**Prayer List**

*Lord,  
Hear Our  
Prayer*

Please continue to pray for those with special prayer needs: Baby Wes, Jack White, Tonya Burke (Dolly's niece) Andrea Evans, Marcia Holmbo, Marge Misek, Pastor Lisa, Lynn Jerde, Gerry Norton, Libby Tipton, Kay Watson, Jackie Reusch, sister-in-law of Anna Appleby (Raymond's wife), and Karl Croffoot. Our shut-ins: Anna Appleby and Sue Vandervate.

If you would like to serve as a "prayer warrior" on the Prayer Chain and pray or know of someone who needs prayer, please call Barbara Schaible at (815-591-3306). And if you can provide an update on anyone on this list who is not a church member, please contact the pastors. Thank you.



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# Scenic Hills Lutheran Parish

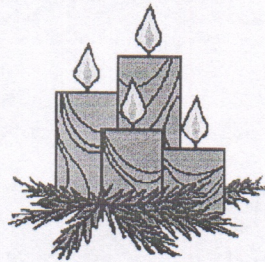
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Published Monthly for:

Scenic Hills  
Lutheran Parish



## Notes from the Pastor's Desk...



### "Advent and the Great Pumpkin"

Yes, that's not a typo, I do mean the Great Pumpkin from the Peanuts special, *It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown*. I hadn't watched this classic in years until a few weeks ago, and when I did, I found something that I hadn't noticed before. For those of you unfamiliar with this classic, in it Linus is the lone believer in the Great Pumpkin who supposedly will fly around bringing toys to believing children on Halloween night. Problem is that every year Linus goes out to the pumpkin patch to welcome the grand gourd while other children trick or treat, but the big pumpkin fails to appear. But Linus is a true believer. He is undeterred. Each year he will fight against the popular celebration of Halloween and go sit awaiting the promised arrival of the Great Pumpkin.

I had always thought Linus' belief in the Great Pumpkin to be odd, but had never thought any more about it. As I watched again, I was struck by the tension between Linus waiting for the Great Pumpkin and the other characters celebrating Halloween. The other characters are all about trick or treat and the big party afterwards, they think it stupid to waste the evening in anticipation of a mythical gourd. But Linus has a strong faith; even though each year his vigil in the pumpkin patch goes unrewarded, he holds to his belief that next year will be the year.

### Website:

[www.scenichillslutheran.com](http://www.scenichillslutheran.com)

Visit us on Facebook  
at  
Scenic Hills Lutheran  
Parish

### Sunday Services

9:00 a.m.

St. John Lutheran Church  
Elizabeth, IL

9:00 a.m.

Trinity Lutheran Church  
Elizabeth, IL

10:30 a.m.

St. Paul Lutheran Church  
Hanover, IL

### Pastoral Staff

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.
















It reminded me of the tension in our culture between Advent and Christmas. For those of us Christians who follow the traditional liturgical seasons, Advent is a time for joyful anticipation and preparation. But the secular Christmas assails us from Thanksgiving on, or even earlier. The question is this: how in the midst of Christmas shopping and decorating and all the Christmas programs can we keep any sense of anticipation in our spiritual life? I am not suggesting that we turn down our culture's demands to come and celebrate Christmas. We need to go to office Christmas parties and our children's holiday programs. But can we keep a place within us for Advent?

Advent is a time for spiritual preparation that comes through recognizing our needs for God and through anticipation of the promise of the coming kingdom of our Savior. A time to notice how much is wrong in us and our world that needs to be redeemed by Christ and renewed by the Spirit. Advent is a time for longing but also excitement. It's a time to think about the incredible gift of the coming of our Savior: in the flesh, in the ministry of Word and sacrament, and in His next coming. Advent prepares us for the continual coming of the Christ child in our lives. We need to prepare for Jesus. I think we can do this without withdrawing from all the Christmas that surrounds us. But I also think that sometimes we need to skip the costume and leave the trick or treat bag at home for just a little while. Just so once in a while we can find a moment to go visit the pumpkin patch. Sit there and watch and yearn for our coming Messiah.





Advent and Christmas blessings,

Pastor Bruce

### Sunday Services

Date	St. John 9:00 a.m.	Trinity 9:00 a.m.	St. Paul – 10:30 a.m.
December 1			
December 8			
December 15			
December 22			
December 29			

### Christmas Services

Date	St. John 7:00 p.m.	St. John 9:00 a.m.	Trinity 7:00 p.m.	St. Paul – 10:30 a.m.
December 24				
December 25				



## Parish Ministries Meetings

### Church Council

Monday, December 2 .....7:00 p.m..... Trinity  
Sunday, December 15.....11:30 a.m. ....St. Paul  
Tuesday, December 17 .....7:30 p.m.....St. John

### Mutual Ministry

Tuesday, December 3 .....7:30 p.m.....St. John

### Women's Group Ministry

Monday, December 9 .....2:00 p.m..... eTown in Elizabeth

## Parish Announcements

### Parish Women's Group Meeting

The parish women will meet on Monday, Dec. 9 at 2:00 p.m. at eTown in Elizabeth. We will have our Bible study and discussion of future projects.

### Come and Worship Our Newborn King

Our parish will offer several worship opportunities for Christmas this year. The Trinity Christmas Eve service will feature a children's program and guest pianist Jill Harmston, and the St. John Christmas Eve service will feature lessons and carols. Both Christmas Eve services will include Communion and the traditional candlelight singing of Silent Night.

For Christmas Day, St. John will have a special Communion service at 9 a.m. and St. Paul will have their own lessons and carols service with Communion at 10:30 a.m. Please consider sharing the true message of the Christmas Child with friends and family by inviting people to our Christmas celebrations.

### Pastors on Vacation

The pastors will be on vacation visiting Pastor Bruce's father in Colorado from Christmas evening through Friday, January 3. Emergency pastoral care will be arranged - watch the bulletins for details.

### Newsletter Submissions

We love to get articles, thank yous, information on events for our newsletters. If you have anything you wish to submit, please send it to the parish email at [scenichillsparish@gmail.com](mailto:scenichillsparish@gmail.com) or contact the pastors by phone or text. By hearing from you we can improve our newsletter!

Thank you,  
Laura Marquez, Editor