

The Philippian

The Monthly Newsletter of St. Philip's Lutheran Church of Hastings, Minnesota

Come and Worship...Come and Serve...Come and Learn...Come as you are
...Philip said to him, "Come and see" John 1:46

December 2025 Events

Grief Support Group
December 3 at 6 pm

RaiseRight Orders Due
December 7

Preschool Christmas Program
December 19 at 6 pm

Blue Christmas Service
December 21 at 3 pm

Christmas Eve Worship Services
December 24 at 3 and 5 pm

Silent night,
holy night,
Son of God,
love's pure light.

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?"

Matthew 11:2-3
Gospel for Third Sunday in Advent



John had spent his adult life preparing people to receive the coming Messiah. He preached and he preached and he preached some more. He lived a destitute lifestyle and was not afraid to speak out against hypocrisy or sin whether it be from self-righteous Pharisees or a king who stole his brother's wife.

The latter resulted in his imprisonment, and it is here that he hears all sorts of things about this guy, Jesus, who he had been telling everyone was the Messiah. One way or another, John had to deal with being wrong, and that is never an easy thing for any of us. Either John was wrong about Jesus being the Messiah or he was wrong about the kind of Messiah God was going to send to save the people.

And so he sends disciples to ask a most painful question, "Are you the one...?" "Are you the one...?"

Like John, it is not unusual for us to find ourselves in prison, though ours are almost always figurative rather than literal. Regardless, our prisons prevent us from living life as God would wish for us. This is true whether our prisons are self-imposed or forced upon us by life's circumstances.

We can be imprisoned by strained relationships with friends or family members. We can be imprisoned by an economy that threatens our means of providing for our families. We can be imprisoned by grief or depression or even arrogance.

From our prisons we would do well to follow John's example and ask Jesus, "Are you the one?" And then we must listen and wait for the Holy Spirit to answer our prayer. If we are granted the grace to believe that Jesus is indeed the one for whom the world waited

over 2,000 years ago, it makes all the difference in the world.

If Jesus is the one, then that affects the way we relate to family and friends. If Jesus is the one, then it affects the way we grieve and the way we work. When we come to believe that Jesus is the one, there is no aspect of our lives that is not affected. We are able to experience hope in the midst of loss and we are able to give and receive love in the midst of hurt. If Jesus is the one, we can be comforted knowing that he is stronger than any prison.

This season of Advent is a season of hope and anticipation, not so much for Jesus' birth, but for his immanent return. Through God's grace, we are a people of hope. Through God's grace we know in our hearts that Jesus is the one to come. Through God's grace we know that there is no prison that can hold us forever. As we journey together this Advent season, know that JESUS IS THE ONE, and he is for you!

Your Servant in Christ,
Pastor Geier

THANK YOU!

The cards, letters and well wishes from my fellow St. Philip's members left me very grateful and even more thankful for my wonderful church family. May God bless you all."

Geneva Weisser

A big thank you to all who generously donated from their gardens and orchards again this year. It's nice to have fresh produce from our abundance to share with the congregation. Keep us in mind for next year's planting!

Thanks to all who helped make the Downtown Halloween Event on October 26 another success! We served over forty-five gallons of cocoa with lots of marshmallows! Thanks so much to those who donated supplies and donated their time. And thanks to Busted Nut Bar and Grill for allowing us to refill our big coolers with hot water. Please consider helping next year with this community outreach!

Fellowship Ministry

Preschool Chatter

The month of November was full of exciting activities learning about Clifford books, healthy eating, and Thanksgiving. This month's activities included learning about kindness from Clifford stories, foods that are healthy for our bodies, having a classroom grocery store, fun turkey songs/activities, and a Thanksgiving feast. We talked a lot about what it means to be thankful and how God has provided us with all the wonderful things we have in our lives. As an another special treat this month, Miss Megan from the library came to share silly songs and stories with our students. Our students absolutely love Miss Megan and we are excited to have her set up to come three times this school year!

We were also able to hold conferences on the evenings of November 24 and 25. This was a wonderful time to share with families about their child's progress as well as their goals moving forward this school year.

The holidays are in the air and preschool is really starting to buzz. The children started working on their Christmas program songs in early November and can't wait to perform *Jesus Me and My Christmas Tree* for their families and friends on December 19 at 6 pm. This is such a fun way for the children to not only learn the true meaning of Christmas but for them to share it with others.

Thank you to those of you who continue supporting our program through the ongoing RaiseRight fundraiser. A special note: December RaiseRight orders are due by Sunday, December 7. We will be placing the order earlier in the month to ensure delivery prior to the holidays. We will resume with the third Sunday deadline in January.

As we move into the Christmas season, we pray that each of you are able to enjoy the reason for the season with your families and friends. May peace and comfort find those of you who need it most during these wonderful, but also what can be a stressful, season.

Christmas blessings to you all,
Becky Kaphing and Lorelei Rein
 Preschool Co-Directors

– Among Our Own –

Congratulations...

Congratulations to all those celebrating their wedding anniversary in December. Listed below are couples reaching a special anniversary i.e. 1st, 5th, 10th, 15th, etc., 50+...

Jamie and Erin Stevens as they celebrate their 15th wedding anniversary on December 11

Brian and Sue Drummond as they celebrate their 51st wedding anniversary on December 28

Rich and LuAnn Roiger as they celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary on December 30

Sunday Scripture Readings

December 7	Isaiah 11:1-10 Romans 15:4-13 Matthew 3:1-12
December 14	Isaiah 35:1-10 James 5:7-10 Matthew 11:2-11
December 21	Isaiah 7:10-16 Romans 1:1-7 Matthew 1:18-25
December 28	Isaiah 63:7-9 Hebrews 2:10-18 Matthew 2:13-23

Please Return Your Pledge Card

Pledge cards may be put in the mail or brought to the church office or in the basket on the Welcome Center by December 28. Budget planning is best done when anticipated giving is known.



It is appreciated when Simply Giving enrollees also remit a pledge card. It affirms that the messaging of what was in the stewardship mailing has been reviewed. (Time and Talent forms is an example)

St. Philip's Stewardship Ministry Team

Adult Forums for December

December 7 - Community Discussion. After hearing from Isaiah and Lutheran Social Services about the many needs in Minnesota we will have a community discussion of what we as individuals and/or as the St. Philip's community want to do about them with advocacy or otherwise. Please be part of the decision making!

December 14 - Shobi's Table. A representative from Shobi's Table, a pay as you can food truck in St. Paul sponsored by our St. Paul Synod, will tell us about their work fighting hunger. Joining them will be our own Linnea Ronning, who interned with Shobi's Table this past summer.

December 21 - Lament Psalms. On the shortest day of the year, join our own Pastor Geier in exploring more Lament scriptures in preparation for our annual Blue Christmas service that afternoon.

December 28 - Christmas Break: No Adult forum today. Please join us again in the "next year" on January 4.

Directory Photo Update

If you have taken a recent family picture or plan to during the holidays, please share it with your St. Philip's family by allowing us to put it in the directory to update your listing. If you would like us to snap a picture for you at church, we would be happy to do that as well. See Becky or Jay Raimann. You can send pictures to Lista in the church office via email (listak@splchastings.org) or to Becky Raimann via email (raimannjandb@comcast.net) or text (651-437-1377).

GIVING AND EXPENSE	
2025	2024
October 2025 YTD General & Misc Giving	
\$389,728.84	\$649,011.65
October 2025 YTD Capital Fund	
\$137,610.28	\$139,949.00
October 2025 YTD Expenses	
\$530,713.53	\$539,337.64
Net	
(\$3,374.41)	\$249,623.01
October 2025 YTD Mortgage Principal Rqrd.	
\$82,350.14	\$78,370.11

Staff Update

After twenty-three years of faithful service, our office administrator, Lista Klocow, gave notice of her retirement from St. Philip's Lutheran Church. Her last day of work will be January 30, 2026. There will be an opportunity prior to that date for us to show our appreciation and gratitude.

Position Available - Office Administrator

St. Philip's Lutheran Church has available the full-time position of Office Administrator. This position serves as administrative support for pastor, staff, council, ministry teams and congregation in the planning and fulfillment of activities in the life of the congregation.

This includes, but is not limited to: preparation/distribution of weekly worship bulletin and monthly newsletter, church records database maintenance, office equipment support, purchase office and other supplies as requested by staff and ministry teams and serve as receptionist.

Position requirements include:

- Intermediate level Microsoft 365 Windows competency with the ability to learn other programs/applications
- Ability to maintain strict adherence to confidentiality
- Ability to pay close attention to detail, prioritize and meet deadlines
- Excellent communication skills
- Ability to work independently

Previous employment experience of five (5) years administrative or comparable work history is desired.

If you are interested in this position, please submit your resume' to Pastor Geier at: pastorgeier@splchastings.org no later than Wednesday, December 10, 2025.

December Grief Support

The last grief support meeting of the year will be held December 3 at 6 pm in the Conference Room. We will reflect on Donna Mathiowetz's The River of Grief presentation, as well as what grief is like during the holiday season. Hope to see you there.



Sunday, December 21 at 3:00 pm

Blue Christmas? Yes, blue as in the blues. As in "I am feeling blue." Not everyone is up and cheery for the Christmas holidays. Dealing with the death of a loved one, facing life after divorce or separation, coping with a vitriolic and divisive election, the loss of a job, living with cancer or some other disease that puts a question mark over the future. There are any number of other experiences that make parties and joviality painful for many in our congregation and community.

Some are mourning the death of a loved one. Some suffer from illness, addiction, or estrangement. Some are lonely, struggling financially, or in conflict with another. Many are dealing with mental illness in one of its many hurtful manifestations. Some hurt because of the great pain, need, and violence in our nation and world. The reasons for coming are myriad.

We will gather to worship on December 21, (the longest night of the year,) though we will be worshipping at 3:00 pm since many people don't like to drive in the dark. We will gather even in our hurt to remember God is good, we are not alone, and we have every reason to hold on to hope.

Advent is often called the season of waiting. What are we waiting for? Hope. The Messiah. A Savior. Celebrating Advent is the recognition that we need a savior. That although the world may be dark, difficult, and lonely, there is a promise coming. Recognizing our loss and making space for grieving doesn't minimize the promise. It accentuates it.

If this service sounds like something that speaks to your life and feelings, know that there is a place for you here. Join us as we come to worship with all our "stuff" on December 21.

RaiseRight

The December date for RaiseRight orders will be December 7 to ensure holiday delivery.

We Need Your Ideas for Giving!



Most of you know that St. Philip's Lutheran Church is a generous community of faith that supports God's work within and beyond our congregation. We invest at least 10% of our regular offerings in ministries outside St. Philip's including the ELCA, Green Lake Lutheran Ministries, and Lutheran Social Services. In addition, at our annual meeting we vote on ministries beyond ourselves to receive 10% of our garage sale proceeds and miscellaneous offerings. One of these ministries is to serve Dakota county residents and the other is to cast a wider circle of ministry.

Previous local ministries on the ballot included Lewis House, Hasting United Way "Food4Kids", and Hastings Family Service. Ministries beyond Hastings have included the Matrix Emergency Shelter in Dakota County, ELCA Domestic & International Response, My Very Own Bed, and mission congregations of the St. Paul Area Synod.

If YOU have an idea you would like to be included on the ballot at our next annual meeting, please let the pastor, church office or a council member know. The council will then decide on three local ministries and three broader ministries to be on the ballot at our December council meeting. The council has decided that three options in each category is a good number of possibilities.

If you are happy with the way things have gone in recent years, the council will pick from previous.

Family Sunday School

On Sunday, November 9 our Sunday school families enjoyed a morning of fellowship and crafts during family Sunday school. They were able to make up to five different crafts as well have some Advent ideas/actives to take home and do as a family during the Advent season.



Pancake and Prayer Breakfast

On November 15 we had families join us for a pancake and prayer event. During this event, families enjoyed a delicious pancake breakfast, talked a little about prayer, made a prayer wheel, and even got to take home a special stuffed animal to use as a prayer buddy. A huge thanks to Pam Hoffman, Doug and Danna Shultz and Camille Johnson-Oster for making our breakfast.



Children's Christmas Program

Children's Christmas program is going to be December 14 during our Sunday morning service. We will be having practice on December 13 from 9:00-11:00 am. We still have non-speaking parts available if you would be interested in having your child take place. Sign up on the children's ministry board or contact Becky Kaphing via email.

Trunk or Treat

On November 1 we had thirteen cars in our parking lot all dressed up and ready to greet close to forty friends from either our preschool or congregation. Children enjoyed playing games, fishing with pastor, a selfie station and hand tattoos. Through this event and the church, we also collected a lot of food for the Food4Kids program. Our confirmation students bagged forty-nine Ziploc bags of food that will be sent home with children who need help with food on the weekends. Along with our forty-nine bags we were also able to send a lot of extra items that can be used to make even more bags in the future.

Thank you to all who participated at the event or donated food!



Youth Ministries Update

The High Schoolers created a great Noah's Ark for the children's Trunk or Treat event. A group of seniors



spent their morning using their artistic abilities to make a great photo opportunity for all the kids. The afternoon crew came in with the help of Carlos Villavicencio to help with the young trick-or-treaters. The food that was collected for Food4Kids was bagged up by the confirmation students during our Confirmation Early Birds group. We were able to put together forty-eight kits with a lot of leftover supplies to donate!



The Middle Schoolers helped clean up some yards with raking this month! We had a lot of help from volunteers: Pastor Geier, Dawn Owen, Amy Geier, Katy Lindberg, Steve Wolverton, and Sam Willis.



The Middle Schoolers Present Parents' Night Out

The next Middle School Youth event will be one that no one will want to miss! On December 13 from 5-8 pm, middle school students will be offering for parents to drop off their children ages 3 and older (who are toilet trained and independent in the restroom) for a night of fun at church! We will be collecting free-will donations that will be given to a charity that the students agree upon. If you want to sign your younger child up for this event, you will do so with this QR code. They need to be signed up by December 6 to attend. Middle Schoolers can RSVP through the GroupMe app.



December's High School event is a Christmas Party on the December 21 from 7-9 pm. We will have cookie decorating, hot chocolate, and games. Students are invited to bring a white elephant gift if they would like to participate in the exchange.

Volunteers are needed for both of these events to be a success. If you are interested, sign up on the bulletin board next to the Youth Room. If you have questions about volunteering, connect with Lydia at lydiac@splchastings.org.

Confirmation 2025

Three St. Philip's Confirmands affirm their Baptism On October 26, 2025, Payton Perseke, Annika King and Cayden Hedeem were Confirmed in the Lutheran faith by Pastor Geier.

Their stoles are of their own creation with symbols and Bible references they selected. During the worship service each Confirmand recited their beliefs and were surrounded by Godparents and family members as they received the rite of Confirmation.



Photo by Kim Hoffbeck (Hoffbeck Photography)

Faith Statements

Annika King proudly gives her Faith Statement as she prepares for her Confirmation. She shared a message about her commitment to being one to care for the well-being of others as something she will always want to model.



Keeping Connected

Hello from Kent and Sue Rischette.

Kent was raised in Hastings, and later lived in St. Paul Park and Cottage Grove, and now has been back in Hastings for eighteen years. He has four grown children, and five grandchildren. He has worked for Pitney Bowes as a service technician for forty-one years and will be retired as of December 5, 2025 (lucky, lucky man!). Kent loves fishing and hunting and being outdoors. He also loves spending time at the camper during the summer months, which is in Wabasha.



Sue was raised in Oakdale and has been in Hastings for over thirty years now. She has three grown children and nine grandchildren. She has worked for Dakota County in the Property Records department, for twenty-one years (and is NOT retiring in December). Sue loves to cross stitch and enjoys traveling, especially our fun last-minute adventures. She also enjoys being at the camper in Wabasha with Kent for some R and R.

Kent and Sue's story began as they became friends from working a second job at Coborn's together, in 2007. Sue thought this was going to be a very short-lived holiday job and ended up staying for sixteen years. It carried her through her divorce, so she was able to keep her house. Kent didn't know when he started that he would become part-time evening management and ended up staying for seventeen years.

Sadly, Kent's wife passed away in 2020. In the fall of 2022, two lonely people got together for a date (but Sue refused to call it a date and tried very hard to come up with an excuse not to go). Sue's daughters convinced her that maybe it was time to take a little time for herself. This is where our love journey began. We had been dating for about two years when we went to a winery, and Kent was trying to propose to Sue. Being the silly girl that Sue is, she thought Kent was trying to take a picture and stepped back away from him to be closer to the beautiful flowers behind her. I am not sure if Kent was getting more frustrated because Sue was walking farther away, or if Sue was more impatient because she just wanted him to take that picture! In the end the answer was yes with many happy tears. We were married at St. Philip's on October 4 of this year.

So how did we get to St. Philip's, you ask? Kent was going to a church that he had belonged to for many years. Sue looked for a new church after getting divorced and never found one that felt right. After going to church together at Kent's church for several months, we wanted to go to a Good Friday service before Easter, and his church did not offer that service. We came to St. Philip's for the first time on Good Friday. On that evening before church started, Pastor Geier came and introduced himself and welcomed us. We went back and forth between Kent's church and St. Philip's for a short time and decided we should start a new church journey with St. Philip's. St. Philip's was a very welcoming congregation, and we felt very much in the right place. We became members in March of 2025. We could not be happier to be here and look forward to continuing to meet more people and find opportunities to serve the church and the community.

Stewardship Temple Talk

On November 2, the final Temple Talk was given by member Patty Wilson. She spoke in specific terms about the meaning of being "Rooted in Gratitude, Growing in Faith". Her life has provided her experience in eight different congregations which have been the strength of being rooted and thankful for them all. Her words were greatly appreciated.



Downtown Halloween Event

St. Philip's had a presence in downtown Hastings on October 26, as a participant in a city sponsored Halloween event for families. Cups of hot chocolate were given out to 850 passers-by. Pictured are Katy Lindberg, Pam Hoffman, Sue Karnick, Pastor Geier, and Mary Rock.



Christmas Worship Leaders

Will you be worshipping here at St. Philip's on Christmas Eve? The Worship and Music Committee is seeking volunteers for the 3:00 and 5:00 pm worship services that day. We are in need of greeters, ushers, lectors, and communion servers. Please sign up on the kiosk in the narthex or contact Lori Best @ 763-807-3667 or loribest1@gmail.com.

Christmas Eve Worship Schedule

3:00 pm
Bells, Unity, Piano

5:00 pm
Strings

Lutheran Social Service Visit

On November 16, St. Philip's was visited by Associate Vice President of Philanthropy, Rev. Kathryn Teide from Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota. Pastor Teide preached the sermon and conducted a one-hour adult session fulfilling the questions of the participants. Traveling with Pastor Teide was Zuhur Samriye, another staff member of LSS' Congregational Development team. Zuhur also met many St. Philip's members.

In both the sermon and education session. Pastor Teide was dynamic in the stories she shared about the breadth and width of LSS's many people helping programs. LSS is 160 years old, and is owned by the six synods of the ELCA in Minnesota. Its programs touch all eighty-seven counties without boundaries of economics or religion. All faiths are served with equal diversification in its staff. Programs of special interest were in child and adult foster care, financial counseling for a broad range of earners, 400 adoptions a year with most from foster homes, Meals Programs, homes for homeless youth and developmentally challenged, veteran's benefits and much more. It was a morning that significantly added to St. Philip's awareness as to how its scheduled contributions and specially called fund drives such as the call for help in refugee resettlement in early 2025 is used to its fullest purpose.



Lefse Making 2025

During two scheduled work times, St. Philip's members mixed, rolled and turned lefse until 175 packages of three were ready for the November 22, Soup, Bake and Quilt Sale.



Sue Cruse, lefse making coordinator, looking askance at a piece of Lefse which won't meet customer standards.



Mixing the Lefse recipe is done in the church kitchen. Shown are Lois Twedt and Karen Elliott who made Lefse balls from forty pounds of potatoes in one work session.



Gerri Holmseth who folds, packages, and judges, all lefse coming off the grills. Helping Gerri is Tammy Krey who served as a helper where needed.



Apryl and Jim Wagner know the art of Lefse making very well

Stewardship Sunday Pancake/Sausage Breakfast

Great fellowship followed the November 9, Stewardship Sunday worship hour, with 110 moms, dads, children and grands, enjoying breakfast together. This is a celebratory event concluding the fall stewardship emphasis around the theme, "Rooted in Gratitude, Growing in Faith".



Bruce Arndtson and Tim Preston have been pancake captains for a number of years.



Kurt Zabel doing his part by turning pancakes for 110 people.

Taking Care of the Grounds

St. Philip's grounds call for a lot of attention. While Precision Landscaping takes care of the parking lot and grassy areas, some of the tree maintenance happens with faithful volunteers with know-how and equipment. Pruning the swamp oak trees which surround the property was needed to be done now. Pictured are Dave Tank, Bruce Arndtson and Steve Wolverton who completed the job on November 11.



All Saints Sunday

November 2, marked All Saints Sunday, observed, as members came forward to light a candle in memory of those they have lost. This is an especially meaningful Sunday for all those at worship. The names of members who have passed away during the current year are read first followed by members coming forward as they receive Communion.



A Christmas Quiz

Name the Carol or Song described:

1. Oh, member of the round table with missing areas
2. Boulder of the tinkling metal spheres
3. Vehicular homicide was committed on Dad's mom by a precipitous darling
4. Wanted in December: top forward incisors
5. Hey, get over here you who are true to your spouses
6. The lad is a diminutive percussionist
7. Sir Lancelot with laryngitis
8. Decorate the entryways
9. Cup-shaped instruments fashioned of a whitish metallic element
10. Oh small Israel urban center
11. Far off in a hay bin
12. We are Kong, Lear, and Nat Cole
13. Duodecimal enumeration of the passage of the yuletide season
14. Leave and broadcast from an elevation
15. Our fervent hope is that you thoroughly enjoy your yuletide season
16. Listen, the winged heavenly messengers are proclaiming tunefully
17. As the guardians of the woolly animals protected their charges in the dark hours
18. I beheld a trio of nautical vessels moving in this direction
19. Jubilation to the entire terrestrial globe
20. Do you perceive the same vibrations that stimulate my auditory sense organs?
21. A joyful song of reverence relative to hollow metallic vessels that vibrate and bring forth a ringing sound when struck
22. A maternal parent was observed osculating a red-coated unshaven teamster by yours truly
23. May the Deity bestow an absence of fatigue to you happy male humans with good manners.
24. A distant relative of Bambi with the same name as a former NYC mayor and a scarlet proboscis.
25. An arrival halfway into the transparent darkness.

Answers available at all Christmas Eve worship services.

ST. PHILIP'S STAFF

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ST. PHILIP'S LUTHERAN CHURCH AND PRESCHOOL

1401 West 15th Street, Hastings, Minnesota

651-437-6541 www.splchastings.org

Church Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday: 9:00 am – 4:30 pm

Friday: 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Sunday Worship Service:

In Person and Livestream Worship at 9:30 am

(Livestream link on www.splchastings.org,

YouTube and Facebook)

Sunday Education Hour:

Adult Forum at 10:40 am

Sunday School at 10:40 am

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