



St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church

2100 16th Street SW, Austin, MN 55912

Worship: 9:30 a.m.

Sunday School and Bible Class: 10:30 a.m.

Pastor Theodore W. Barthels

Phone: 507-433-1957

Cell: 507-219-2517

Church Office:

Phone: 507-433-8191

Worship Services broadcast on Austin Cable Channel 6, M & W, 7:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Affiliated with
CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION

[HTTP://stpaulclcaustin.wordpress.com](http://stpaulclcaustin.wordpress.com)

www.CLclutheran.org

www.ilc.edu/home.htm

PRE-SERVICE PRAYER: Heavenly Father as we once again celebrate Your Son's incarnation and birth, lead us to find our comfort and joy in knowing that Jesus came to be our Savior. Help us remember always that His sacrifice upon the cross purchased our peace. As we this day receive His body and blood in the blessed sacrament, we ask that Your Spirit bless us and increase our faith, that we may grow in grace and in the assurance of everlasting life that is ours in Christ Jesus, the Babe of Bethlehem. Amen.

THE ORDER OF SERVICE: p. 15

HYMNS: 69; 61; 63; 313:1

THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Isaiah 40:1-10

This is one of the richest gospel prophecies in which the Lord urges the prophet to come to Comfort His people and to assure them that their warfare is over, for our iniquity has been pardoned and we have received a double portion of grace to cover all our sins. The ministry of John the Baptist is foretold, as this prophecy calls for us to prepare the way of the Lord and make a spiritual highway for our God, Christ the Lord. So we also join in proclaiming the good tidings.

THE EPISTLE LESSON: Romans 2:12-16

The law condemns us all and reveals that we have no righteousness of our own that avails before God. It is not enough to hear the law or know the law, but one must fulfill the law. Even those who don't have the Scriptures in their hands have a natural knowledge of the law of God with their consciences bearing witness of this and either accusing them or making excuses for ones sin.

THE SERMON: Matthew 3:1-12

Theme: John the Baptist's Message: What is it Really All About?

- I. It is NOT about the Externals, but Rather Confession.
- II. It is NOT about Social Status, but rather about Proper Fruits.
- III. It IS all about Jesus and the Wonder of His Grace.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

We observe the Scriptural practice of close communion. Since participation in communion is a confession of unity of teaching and faith, you will not want to commune with us until you have had a chance to compare your beliefs with ours. Please speak with the pastor to set up an appointment - we want to share this blessing with you!

CALENDAR

TODAY: Sunday School (Program Practice) and Church council Christmas bag decorating, and Christmas decorating will follow the service this morning. Potluck will be served at about 11:30.

WEDNESDAY: Midweek Advent Meditation. Soup and sandwich supper begins serving at 6:00 p.m. Advent meditation begins at 7:00 Meditation theme: How Silently How Silently the Wondrous Gift Was Given! Text Romans 8:33 The Silence of Satan, a lesson in the gift of Christmas.

FRIDAY: **ILC Christmas Concert** is scheduled for **7:30 p.m., Friday, December 20** at Messiah Lutheran Church in Eau Claire, WI. If you are planning to attend the concert and would like to sing the "**Hallelujah Chorus**" along with the choir, you are asked to bring a copy of the score. A downloadable version (public domain) is available at <http://www0.cpd.org/wiki/images/sheet/han-m42c.pdf>

NEXT SUNDAY: Worship at 9:30. Sunday school (FINAL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM PRACTICE) and Bible class follow the service. Sermon text: Isaiah 2:2-5.

FUTURE DATES TO REMEMBER

December 24: Christmas Eve Children's Program is scheduled for 6:00 p.m.

December 25: Christmas Festival Worship at 9:30 a.m.

December 31: New Year's Eve worship with Holy Communion at 7:00 p.m.

SERVING TODAY

Organist: Denise Barthels

Ushers: Preston Johnson, Andy Ball, Lance Groth, Ken Nickson,

Cleaning: Hellickson

OUR RESPONSE TO THE GOSPEL:

Attendance December 1 Worship – 26 Bible class – 9

Sunday school – 5 Dec. 11 Midweek Advent Meditation -- 16

Weekly Offerings Needed	\$ 1,045.00	Other Offerings / Memorials	
Offerings Received	1,168.00	Missions	\$15.00
Needed for Year:	50,150.00		
Received for Year:	43,729.55		

CHRISTMAS BAGS DONATIONS. Each Christmas Eve approximately 60 bags of fruit, nuts and candy and are given out to children and guests and families at the Christmas Eve service. **Your generous gifts make this possible.** Today is the final Sunday for donations for this purpose. Gifts can be placed in the designated basket in the narthex.

CLC NEWS: Salem Lutheran church of Eagle Lake, MN has called the Rev. George Duffman of Faulkton, SD to be their pastor.

BIBLE READING PLAN: This 3 year plan devised by one of the members of Faith Lutheran in Ballwin, Missouri, is available for any who are interested. Average reading length is about a chapter a day Monday – Saturday of each week. It is a very workable aid to assist Bible readers to actually read through the entire Bible. Available on the table immediately outside the Nave by the calendars. **Special note receive your reading on your computer every day:** Use this link from Grace Lutheran in Fridley <http://threeyearbiblereadingplan.wordpress.com/>. You may also receive the selection from the Spokesman's "Daily Bread" devotional at: <http://glcdailydevotion.wordpress.com/clc/>. You may select to listen to them being read by Pastor Paul Naumann in the King James version.