

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

November 30, 2025

10am Worship with Holy Communion

WELCOME TO ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH We believe all people are created in God's image.

Rooted in Jesus' ministry of liberation, unconditional love, and hospitality, we strive to welcome all into our community. This welcome explicitly includes those who have traditionally been marginalized in the church and society due to their sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital status, racial and ethnic background, physical ability, developmental ability, citizenship/documentation status, and socio-economic status.

Hearing assist devices are available in the narthex.

If you need any other help with worship,
please speak with an usher at the doors to the sanctuary.



ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

701 S. College Avenue, Newark, Delaware 19713
Growing in faith. Growing in community.
Welcoming all in Jesus' name.



+ GATHERING +

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

Upon entering the sanctuary, the people pray silently or engage in quiet meditation allowing the music to focus their attention on God and God's kingdom.

PRELUDE

"Creator of the Stars of Night"

CONDITOR ALME SIDERUM

arr. David Lasky

WELCOME

Please stand, as you are able.

CALL TO WORSHIP

On Sundays and Mondays, on good days and bad days, early in the morning and very late at night, here in this room, and out in the world, God, we long for you to break in.

Meet us in this space.

Surprise us with your presence.

Fill this room with your good news.

With hope, we sing, we pray, we worship.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Friends, in our prayer of confession, we lay our hearts before God. We pour out the truth of our lives. We do not hide anything from our Creator, and in that simple act, God somehow always feels closer. Together, we invite God to draw closer, to break in here.

Ever-present God, we long to feel you close. We long to feel your presence in our lives. We long for you to break through the chaos and suffering of this world. However, if we're honest, we rarely stand still long enough to feel you in our midst. Forgive our rushing and distractions. Forgive our wandering hearts, and center us in this space. Remind us that even in the time of Herod, even on the longest nights, you are always there. Amen.

Family of faith, even when we doubt God's presence, even when we fail to notice God's fingerprints in this world, God is always moving closer to us. Hear and believe the good news this Advent season:

Nothing can keep God's love away.

We are seen. + We are forgiven. We are not alone. Amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE

The King Shall Come ELW 260



Text: John Brownlie, 1859-1925

Music: CONSOLATION, A. Davisson, Kentucky Harmony, 1816; arr. Theodore A. Beck, 1929-2003

Arr. © 1969 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission.

GREETING AND PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

May the one who calls, the one who sends, and the one who journeys with us—be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

With-us God, in the time of Moses, you spoke through water in the desert and a pillar of smoke. In the time of the judges, you spoke through the prophets. In the time of Herod,

you spoke through angel choruses and unlikely miracles. In every time you have been speaking. So today, in our time, we ask that you would speak again. Break through the chatter and the distraction of our weary minds and speak to us once more. With hope we pray,

Amen.

Be seated.

CANDLELIGHTING LITANY

Choir: As we watch for the dawn of a brighter day,

A candle of hope lights the way.

As we look for the signs of the promised birth,

Of a Savior who brings heaven to earth.

Lord, we are waiting for peace to reign.

Lord, we are listening for love's refrain.

For hope, peace, and joy, and love to unite

in the beauty and wonder of Advent's holy light.

Our Advent journey begins today with the lighting of the first candle, the candle of hope. Like the flame of a candle, may hope be ignited in our hearts, reminding us that brighter days are ahead.

The first candle is lit.

For those of us facing difficult challenges

Ignite our hearts with hope.

For the end of wars wreaking havoc and pain in our world **Ignite our hearts with hope.**

For safety for those fleeing the tyranny of oppression **Ignite our hearts with hope.**

For the light of forgiveness to shine in our hearts **Ignite our hearts with hope.**

Gracious Creator, in moments of uncertainty, we turn to you with hearts heavy but hopeful. Grant us the strength to navigate challenges, the wisdom to see possibilities, and the courage to embrace the journey ahead, May hope be our guiding light, leading us to a future filled with grace, love, and possibilities beyond our imagining.

Amen.

The assembly joins the choir in singing:



Choir: Advent's holy light.

+ WORD +

God speaks to us in readings, preaching, and song.

POEM

In the Time of Herod

I didn't live during Herod's time — that brutal, murderous king, *God save his soul*. But even hundreds of years later, I know the prayers of his people.

I know the prayers of the mothers and the children under his rule. I know the prayers of the young men under his angry arm.

I know their prayers, because anyone who has ever lived in this soft world for more than two days knows how to pray for a miracle.

We rub our hands together. We fold weary shoulders in, a cage of bone to protect our bleeding hearts.

We sing, we shall overcome and bind my wandering heart to thee. We walk across bridges and in front of powerful buildings.

We cover our cars in stickers that scream, we will not give up!

We allow a hungry cry to slip from our lips,

giving our lament a life of its own (with room to dance!).

And when all of that is said and done, we whisper to our creator, God, break through the yelling and the fear. Break through the violence and the oppression. Get past the Herods of this world, and come be here.

Like every bleeding heart before, we pray for a miracle.

SCRIPTURE READING Lamentations 3:55-57

Do not fear!

A reading from Lamentations:

I called on your name, O Lord, from the depths of the pit; you heard my plea, "Do not close your ear to my cry for help, but give me relief!" You came near when I called on you; you said, "Do not fear!"

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Please stand, as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW Setting 6





GOSPEL READING

Luke 1:5-13

The birth of John the Baptist foretold

The Holy Gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was descended from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. But they had no children because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years.

Once when he was serving as priest before God during his section's turn of duty, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord to offer incense. Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified, and fear overwhelmed him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Pastor Cris Frigm

Please stand, as you are able.

HYMN OF THE DAY

In the Time of Herod

Tune: ELW 294



In the time of Her - od, had ta - ken hold fear fog the fear grew, slow - ly creep-ing Thick as in Pierc-ing through the stra - tus comes the an - gels' song of Her - od, the time fear has ta - ken hold



Hope was bur - ied deep and Day by day the peo - ple "Do not fear!" rings hol - low Still we share a long - ing

hid - den, rare as gold bent and drew with - in when we've feared so long for a glimpse of hope



Or - di - na - ry peo - ple With the clouds so hea - vy, Still in the re - cess - es Or - di - na - ry peo - ple dared not speak a - loud who could see the stars? of our wea - ry souls shout the truth we trust:



Dreams of the Mes - si break-ing through the clouds ah Hope - less-ness had trapped them, strong as pris - on bars Some - thing is a - wak - ened- could it be our hope? God will stop at no - thing to be here with us

Text: Anna Strickland © 2025 A Sanctified Art, LLC

Music: Cranham, Gustov Holst, 1906

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Let us proclaim our faith:

We have seen the valley.

We have seen a sky without stars.

We have seen the longest night, and still we believe.

We believe in a with-us God.

We believe in the hope of tomorrow.

We believe that good news is louder than fear.

We believe this good news is for all people.

So even when our knees shake, even when our voice trembles, even when fear is all around us, we will hold onto that good news.

We will reach for each other.

We will look for God in our midst. We will sing songs of joy.

We will proclaim:

Unto us, love is born.

We have seen the longest night,

and we have seen unimaginable love.

So still, we believe.

Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

God of starlight,

there are days when beauty catches us by surprise.

There are days when joy bubbles up inside us,

when hope grows wings and soars beyond us, when love is so big and so real that it is all we can see.

There are days when all seems right in the world, but not every day.

There are other days, God, when, like John the Baptist, we find ourselves wondering where we could possibly go from here.

We find ourselves wondering if we really did make a difference, or if change was a lost cause all along.

You know the kind of days we speak of, God.

We lament days with ambulance sirens and phone calls from the doctor.

Days of loneliness and haunting news reports.

Days spent at the cemetery or the jail.

Days when the suffering and injustice of the world feels particularly close.

There are so many ways our hope can run dry.

We pray for our kindred and companions who are ill or despairing, especially..., those on our prayer list, those we now name aloud or in the silence of our hearts...(brief silence), and those affected by HIV and AIDS as we remember World AIDS Day. Surround all with care and consolation.

God of starlight,

when the weight of the world presses in on us, when injustice and suffering feel like the dominant narrative, when hope begins to slip through our hands, run toward us. Remind us of the birds that sing in the morning.

Remind us of the flowers that push through thawing ground.

Remind us of the groups of people that have always made a difference.

Remind us of the work this church has done.

Remind us of the work our hands are capable of, and the love our heart already knows.

At the last, bring us with all the saints, *especially...*, to your holy city where peace and goodness make a home.

The presiding minister concludes the prayers.

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

Amen.

THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

The assembly exchanges signs and words of God's peace, saying, **Peace be with you.**

Be seated.

+ MEAL +

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

GATHERING OF GIFTS

In response to God's love in Jesus Christ, we offer our gifts for service and mission.

At this time, please sign the Fellowship Pad (the black folder) found at the end of your pew and pass it to your neighbor and back again. We ask visitors to provide us with contact information so we can thank you for enriching our worship experience. We ask members to update any changes to their information so records are maintained.

ANTHEM

"Come, Blessed Promised One" Sanctuary Choir arr. Fettke

Please stand, as you are able, and sing as the gifts are presented and the table is set.

OFFERTORY We Are Waiting for Jesus ACS 905; Vs. 1 wait - ing sus brings 1 We are for Je Je sus; We are wait - ing for Je Je brings peace. sus: sus



Text: John Helgen, b. 1957

Music: JESUS BRINGS PEACE, John Helgen Text and music © 2013 Augsburg Fortress

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. God of abundance,

we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.

And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



With-us God, we live in a fearful world.

If we're honest, we come to this Table today with the taste of fear on our tongues.

We come to this Table carrying our anxiety.

We come to this Table asking for guidance.

We come to this Table with all of life's "what-ifs.

But you do not disregard our fear.

You do not brush it under the rug or call us foolish.

You do not ignore the realities in front of us.

You do not dish out hurtful platitudes,

telling us to "toughen up" or "power through."

Instead, you meet us here.

You listen to our fears.

You remind us that we are not alone.

You surround us with people who love us.

You show us where we are strong.

You walk beside us.

And you give us a new song to sing.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,

shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his life, death, and resurrection, we await his coming again in righteousness and peace.

Pour out your Spirit on this Table. Pour out your Spirit on this ordinary bread. Pour out your Spirit on this ordinary wine.

For the thing we fear the most is distance from you, so draw near to us here.

Saturate this room with your Spirit and this Table with your love.

And as you do, we will join our voices and pray the words your son taught us to pray, saying:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Here at this Table, you are wanted and welcomed. You are safe and loved.

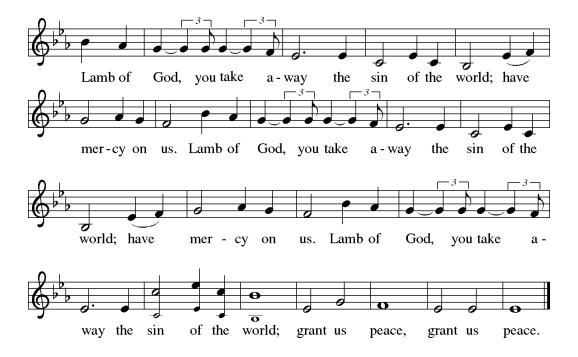
Here at this Table, you belong.

There is no need for fear here, for this is a joyful feast.

You are invited. Come. All are welcome.

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

ELW Setting 6



Be seated.

HOLY COMMUNION

In Christ's body and blood given to us, God forgives us and nourishes us for mission.

All are welcome at the Lord's Table. Those who choose not to commune are welcome to come forward for a blessing, indicated by crossed arms. If you would like to receive communion in your pew, please notify an usher. Non-alcoholic grape juice and gluten-free communion wafers are available upon request.



DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

There Is a Longing in Our Hearts ACS 1078

Found on p. 16

We Wait the Peaceful Kingdom

GTG 378

Found on p. 17

There Is a Longing in Our Hearts



Text: Anne Quigley, b. 1955

Music: LONGING, Anne Quigley

Text and music © 1992 Anne Quigley. Published by OCP, 5536 N. Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213. All rights reserved.

We Wait the Peaceful Kingdom



- 1 We wait the peace ful king dom, when wolf and lamb shall lie
- 2 Where is the peace-ful king-dom? When will this new day start?
- 3 When wars of des o la tion and hate come to an end,
- 4 That lit tle child shall lead us to walk the cho sen way,



in gen - tle - ness and friend - ship with - out a fear or sigh, We long for peace and com - fort to reign with - in each heart. when na - tion meets with na - tion and calls the oth - er "friend," to share the peace - ful king - dom, to greet God's new - born day.



when li on shall be graz - ing, when snake shall nev - er strike: Yet not in our lives on - ly, sim - ply nor in our home: still peace in all its full - ness will on - ly have be - gun: The child born in sta - ble is sent to break our chains,



a lit - tle child shall lead us both strong and weak a - like. we pray that all cre - a - tion will one day find sha - lom. sha - lom for all cre - a - tion be - gins with jus - tice done. to bring through word and ta - ble the day when jus - tice reigns.

This text paraphrases Isaiah 11:6–9 in the first stanza, then reflects on that passage in widening frames of reference from self to all creation and identifies its "little child" with one born at Bethlehem. The tune is named for the composer's sister, his first piano teacher.

TEXT: Kathleen R. Moore, 2010 MUSIC: Hal H. Hopson, 1983

MERLE'S TUNE 7.6.7.6.D After all have communed and returned to their places, remain seated.

BLESSING AND PRAYER

Strengthened by the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ and kept in his grace, we pray:

Loving God, in a world racked with fear, you gather us together. You set the table. You meet us here. You nourish our bodies as you nourish our spirits. You remind us that this is a joyful feast, and that fear cannot win every time. So, with renewed courage, with renewed hope, with renewed conviction, send us out into the world. Help us to feed others as you have fed us. With gratitude we pray, **Amen.**

+ SENDING +

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

LIFE OF THE CHURCH – ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please stand, as you are able.

BENEDICTION

In a fearful world, may you look for God's spirit. May you reach for each other's hands. May you choose courage whenever you can. And in all things, may you remember that good news is louder than fear.

May God who comes among us, Father, \pm Son, and Holy Spirit, grant you hope in the waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news to share today and always. **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

Break, Day of God, O Break

CP 99

Found on p. 19

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Do not be afraid.

Thanks be to God.

Break, Day of God, Break



POSTLUDE

"Prepare the Royal Highway"

Iacob Reed

Bereden väg för Herran

ASSISTING IN WORSHIP TODAY

Assisting Minister: Mary Beth Bergstrom

Lector: Barbara Rhodes

Bread Provider: Linda Radwick Altar Guild: Linda Radwick

Flower Guild:



The greens in the chancel are given to the glory and praise of God in honor of Victor and Cindy Parada's birthdays.



Copyright © 2025 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS103532.

New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition. Copyright © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission.

All rights reserved worldwide.

Revised Common Lectionary, Copyright © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts, admin Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission.

What Do You Fear? Advent worship resources © 2025 A Sanctified Art. www.sanctifiedart.org Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Advent's Holy Light: A Candlelighting Ceremony for Advent written by Joel Raney © 2024 Hope Publishing Company. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Permission to reprint, podcast, and/or stream the music in this service obtained from OneLicense.net with license #A-719656. All rights reserved.

ST. PAUL'S WEEKLY EPISTLE

IMPORTANT NEWS FOR THE WEEK OF NOVEMBER 30, 2025

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT - WHAT DO YOU FEAR?

Luke begins his gospel by orienting us within "the time of King Herod," and we begin the series by fleshing out what it might have been like to live in the days when Jesus was born—a time not all that different from our own. As an elderly priest, Zechariah had witnessed the fall of Judean independence and the beginning of Roman occupation. He longed for the coming Messiah, and he longed for a son. The author of Lamentations cries out in personal pain while his homeland is under Babylonian rule. Our global and personal heartache are intertwined, and the wait for promised rescue is hard to bear. Whether in exile, under the rule of a puppet king, or in the depths of personal pain, we long for God to break through the fear and bring us hope.

CHOIR REHEARSALS RESCHEDULED

This week, there will also be no rehearsals on Thursday, December 4; instead, the Sanctuary Choir and Handbell Ensemble will rehearse on **Monday**, **December 1** at **6:30 PM and 8:00 PM**, respectively.

CHAMBER ORCHESTRA FOR CHRISTMAS

If you play a woodwind, string, or brass instrument, and would like to join in the fun of accompanying hymns and anthems on Christmas Eve, as well as our *Sounds of the Season* concert on January 4 at 4PM, please let Mike Bareham, Director for Music and Worship, know. He plans to rehearse on Mondays, December 15 and December 22 from 4 – 5:30 PM. He will send you PDFs of the music prior to the first rehearsal. Most of the arrangements are written for high school proficiency.

FAMILY GATHERING

Our families with young ones are invited to gather for a craft and Advent activity after church on **December 21**. We'll provide a light snack, and we'll learn a little bit together. The gathering will be in the classroom beside Fellowship Hall.

A HILLTOP THANK YOU

A huge thank you to everyone who contributed to last Sunday's Thanksgiving Basket drive for the Hilltop Lutheran Neighborhood Center. Between the donations of food and cash, we donated 136 complete baskets (a record!) and fourteen additional turkeys. Your contributions are greatly appreciated!

HOPE DINING ROOM

Your help is needed to stock the pantry items to aid the mission of feeding our neighbors facing food insecurity. Items requested include sweet corn, seasoned breadcrumbs, Ragu spaghetti sauce, large red jello (any flavor) and boxed mashed potatoes. Please place any donations in the brown box in the Narthex.

We are also in need of monetary donations to help pay for the fresh food items required. Please clearly mark the donation for Hope Dining Room. Any questions or concerns, please call Cheri Simons at 302-345-6573. Thank you for your support.

HEY - WHAT GIVES?

Black Friday, Small Business Saturday, Cyber Monday – all big, Big, BIG shopping days in the U.S. Sandwiched right in between the second and third of those events this year is the First Sunday of Advent, which is a big deal in our church calendar. But there's one more very important date to keep in mind: Giving Tuesday on December 2. Your Stewardship Committee would like to ask you to spend a minute (and some money) on giving thanks and giving to others on that day. Make a donation to whatever worthy cause is near-and-dear to your heart, but please consider making a contribution this year to our "local" benevolence option – St. Paul's School. Your help makes their program go!

BREWING THEOLOGY

For everyone twenty-one and older, please join us on Wednesday, **December 10**, **at 7:00 PM** at the home of Rick and Kris Cassar, located at 438 Pierce Run in Newark, for a tasty beverage, some snacks, and some Christmas Charades.

COOKIES NEEDED FOR FISH

FISH is packing cookie boxes again this year for our clients and we hope you can help us out with a few of your favorites. Drop off is any time Sunday, December 14, up through Thursday, December 18.



Christmas Poinsettia Order Form

In the United States, the flower most symbolic of the Christmas season is the poinsettia. This lovely Christmas flower will be used to adorn the sanctuary on Christmas Eve and throughout the Christmas season. The flowers you order may be picked up after the *Sounds of the Season* concert on Sunday afternoon, January 4.

Please return this order form to the Church Office no later than Sunday, December 7. Payment can be made by cash, check, or by clicking the "Christmas Poinsettia" tab on the drop down menu using Tithe.ly, accessed by the QR Code below.

I/we would like	to order a total of _	6" poinsettias (5-6 blo	oms) at \$10.00 each.
Color and	quantity: F	Red White	
I/we would like	to order a total of _	8" poinsettias (12-18 b	looms) at \$25.00 each.
Color and	quantity: F	RedWhite	
I/we would like	to order a total of _	10" poinsettias (16-24 l	olooms) at \$35.00 each
Color and	quantity: F	RedWhite	
-	to donate to the even	ergreens needed to decorate	• •
Total: \$	En	velope #	
Paid by: [] Cash [] Che	eck #	SCAN ME
]] Tithe.ly online g	riving	
Given by:			
In Honor of: _			
In Memory of	:		



Together in Jesus Christ we are freed by grace to live faithfully, witness boldly, and serve joyfully.



The Reverend Cris Frigm	302-368-0064 ext. 103
Pastor	pastor@stpaulsnewarkde.org
Michael Bareham	302-368-0064 ext. 105
Director for Music and Worship	<u>music@stpaulsnewarkde.org</u>
Jerilynn Hinrichs	302-368-0064 ext. 101
Office Administrator	<u>office@stpaulsnewarkde.org</u>
Nalini Janaki	302-368-0064 ext. 102
Business Administrator	<u>business@stpaulsnewarkde.org</u>
Dr. Rae Watts	302-368-0064 ext. 201
School Director	<u>stpaulschool701@outlook.com</u>

Church Council

Anne Sullivan (*President*), Greg Johnson (*Vice President*), Heidi Burch (*Secretary*), Mary Collins (*Treasurer*), Kristine Cassar, Phillip Gerecke, Winnie Hull, Ian Kenyon, Susie Olson.

Weekly Epistle/E-mail Blast – articles are due by Wednesday morning at 10 AM to <u>office@stpaulsnewarkde.org</u>. Late submissions will be shared the following week. Prayers can be requested confidentially or shared with the congregation as desired. <u>prayonstspauls@gmail.com</u>







Electronic Giving

