

NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

CHRISTMAS EVE, DECEMBER 24, 2025
7:00 PM CANDLELIGHT SERVICE OF 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.

PRELUDES

Starting at 6:30 PM

"Wexford Carol"

arr. Kurt Meyer

Handbell Ensemble & Percussion

"A Winter's Night, So Deep"

arr. Brenda Austin

Handbell Ensemble

"Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming"

arr. Jantz Black

Sanctuary Choir & Organ

"Love Came Down at Christmas"

arr. John Carter

Sanctuary Choir, Harp & Strings

"Breath of Heaven"

arr. Joel Raney

Handbell Ensemble & Piano

TONIGHT'S INSTRUMENTALISTS

(* denotes guest musician)

Flutes: Joan Sparks*, Cheryl Johnson Clarinets: Jared Sharpe, Eliza Goldman* Trumpets: Jerry Goldman*, David Otto

Low Brass: Karen Randall*, Henry Chisholm Violins: Carl Van Valkenburg*, Dan Halbert*

Harp: Anne Sullivan

Keyboard/Piano: Ryan Snyder

WELCOME

Please stand, as you are able.

CALL TO WORSHIP

On this holy night, we come, dazzled and awe-struck, ready to sing alongside the angels. On this holy night, we come, eager and hopeful, ready to journey alongside the shepherds. On this holy night, we come, quietly and tenderly, ready to worship alongside Mary. On this holy night, we come, singing, trusting, believing, proclaiming: good news is louder than fear. Let us worship our good news, with-us God.

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

In a fearful world, where do you see the presence of God?

We see God's fingerprints all around us.

We see God in the beauty of the stars.

We see God in the love of this community.

We see God in the dreams we hold for a better world.

You are right. Even in a fearful world.

You are right. Even in a fearful world, God is here. God is all around us.

On this holy night, we light the Christ Candle as a reminder of this good news. May this flicker of light help us remember that even in a fearful world, God's love is all around us.

The Christ candle is lit.

Thanks be to God for a love like that! **Amen**.

ELW 283 (harmony)

Interlude before the last verse



Text: attr. John Francis Wade. 1711-1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-1880, sts. 1, 3-4; tr. unknown, st. 2 Music: ADESTE FIDELES, attr. John Francis Wade

GREETING AND PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

May the blessings of the holy Trinity, \pm one God, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty Savior, Prince of Peace, be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

God of yesterday, today and tomorrow, we long to catch a glimpse of your Spirit. We cup our ears to hear the sound of the angel chorus. We turn our eyes toward the sky to see if we can find your star. We lean forward in our seat to see if we can feel your presence in our midst. We long to catch a glimpse of your Spirit, O God. So on this quiet night, on this holy night, on this *joyful* night, reveal yourself to us once more. Speak to us through the music and the children. Speak to us through starlight and candlelight. Speak to us through these ancient words once again. We long to catch a glimpse of you. **Amen.**

HYMN OF PRAISE

Angels We Have Heard on High

ELW 289 (harmony)

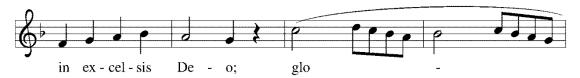


- 1 An gels we have heard on high, sweet ly sing ing o'er the plains,
- 2 Shep-herds, why this ju bi-lee? Why your joy ous strains pro-long?
- 3 Come to Beth-le-hem and see him whose birth the an gels sing



and the moun-tains in re-ply, ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains. What the glad-some tid - ings be which in - spire your heav'n - ly song? come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born king.







Text: French carol; tr. H. F. Hemy, *The Crown of Jesus Music*, 1864 Music: GLORIA, French carol

Be seated.

+ WORD +

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 9:2-7

A child is born for us.

A reading from Isaiah:

- 2 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined.
- 3 You have multiplied exultation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.
- 4 For the yoke of their burden and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.
- 5 For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.
- 6 For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,

Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
7 Great will be his authority,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

"I Wonder As I Wander" Sanctuary Choir & Instrumentalists arr. Kyle Pederson

Please stand, as you are able.

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 2:1-20

God with us.

The Holy Gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴ Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room.

⁸ Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a

manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, ¹⁹ and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Be seated.

SERMON Pastor Cris Frigm

Feel free to take notes or write down your own reflections on this morning's message.

Spirit-led doodling is also acceptable.



HYMN OF THE DAY

On Christmas Night ELW 274



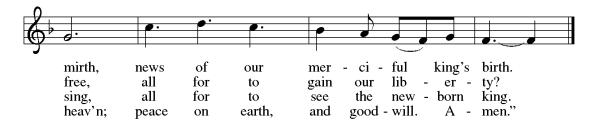
- 1 On Christ-mas night all Chris-tians sing to hear the news the
- 2 Then why should we on earth be sad, since our re-deem er 3 When sin de-parts be-fore his face, then life and health come
- 4 All out of dark ness we have light, which made the an gels



gels bring. On Christ - mas night all Chris - tians sing an glad? should we made us Then why on earth be sad. since When in its place. sin de - parts be fore his face, then sing this night. A11 of dark - ness have light, which out we



an - gels bring: of great joy, news of the news the news hear great re - deem - er made us glad, when from our he our sin set us life and health come in its place. An - gels re ioice with us and made the an - gels sing this night: "Glo - ry to God in high - est



Text: Luke Wadding, d. 1686, alt. Music: SUSSEX CAROL, English traditional

RESPONSIVE PRAYER

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth. Blessed are you, Prince of Peace.

You rule the earth with truth and justice.

Send your gift of peace to all nations of the world.

Blessed are you, Wonderful Counselor.

You enlighten the heart with steadfast love.

Enliven your church that it might bear good tidings of great joy to all people.

Blessed are you, Emmanuel.

You promise to be with us even to the end of the age.

Open our eyes to see your presence in all who are hungry, lonely, or homeless.

Blessed are you, Son of Mary.

You share our humanity.

Have mercy on the sick, the dying, and all who suffer this day.

Blessed are you, Son of God.

You dwell among us as the Word made flesh.

Reveal yourself to us in word and sacrament that we may bear your light to all the world. 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.

ተ MEAL ተ

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. There are also QR Codes at the end of this worship folder for attendance, prayer requests, and online giving.

ANTHEM

"O Holy Night"

arr. Mark Hayes

Sanctuary Choir & Instrumentalists

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

OFFERTORY HYMN

What Child Is This ELW 296 (harmony)



- 1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar-y's lap is sleep-ing?
- 3 So bring him in cense, gold, and myrrh; come, peas-ant, king, to own him.



Whom an - gels greet with an-thems sweet while shep-herds watch are keep-ing? The King of kings sal - va-tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en-throne him.



This, this is Christ the king, whom shep-herds guard and an-gels sing; Raise, raise the song on high, the vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. God of glory,

great are your wonders among us and many are the blessings you bestow. Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world, that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace, through Christ our Savior. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

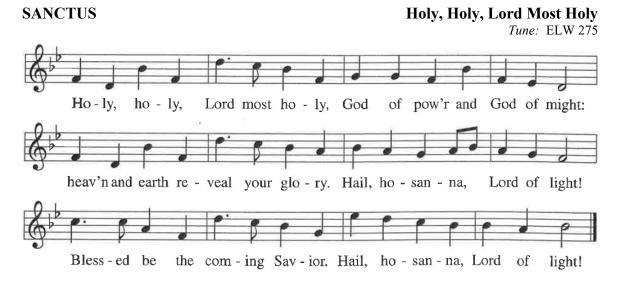
Lift up your hearts.

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. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. And so, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Text: metrical Sanctus, Martin A. Seltz, b. 1951 Music: REGENT SQUARE, Henry T. Smart, 1813–1879 Text © 1998 Augsburg Fortress

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

God with us, we live in a fearful world.

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.

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 in 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 all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this in remembrance of me.

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, with hope, 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

God is now in flesh appearing.

We come to the feast of joy!

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

Lamb of God



Lamb of God, the world's Re - deem - er, mer - cy to your peo - ple give.



Lamb of God, the world's Re - deem - er, may we in your mer - cy live.



Lamb of God, we all im-plore: Grant us peace for-ev-er-more.

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.



HYMNS DURING THE DISTRIBUTION

Please join in singing as you make your way to the Lord's Table.

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

ELW 282 (harmony)



- 1 It came up on the mid night clear, that glo rious song of old,
- 2 Still through the clo ven skies they come with peace-ful wings un furled,
- 3 And you, be neath life's crush-ing load, whose forms are bend-ing low,
- 4 For lo! The days are has-t'ning on, by proph-ets seen of old,



from an - gels bend - ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold: and still their heav'n-ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world. who toil a - long the climb-ing way with pain - ful steps and slow: when with the ev - er - cir - cling years shall come the time fore - told,



"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav'n's all-gra-cious king."

A - bove its sad and low-ly plains they bend on hov-'ring wing, look now, for glad and gold-en hours come swift - ly on the wing; when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen-dors fling,



The world in sol - emn still-ness lay hear the an sing. to gels ba - bel sounds the bless - ed an and ev - er o'er its gels sing. the wea-ry road and hear the an oh, rest be - side sing! the world give back the song which now the an and all sing.

Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810–1876 Music: CAROL, Richard S. Willis, 1819–1900

Gloria Jin excelsis

O Little Town of Bethlehem ELW 279 (harmony)



0 Beth - le - hem, how lit - tle town of still we see thee lie! For Christ is born of gath - ered Mar у. and, all bove a -How si - lent - ly, how won - drous gift si - lent - ly the giv'n! is ho - ly child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us. we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep the si - lent stars go while mor-tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won-d'ring love. So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heav'n. out our sin, and en - ter in. be born in to - day. cast us



yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing light. O morn-ing stars, to geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth, com - ing; but, No ear may hear his in this world of sin, hear the Christ-mas We an - gels the great glad tid - ings tell;



The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night. God the king, and the earth! all and prais - es sing to peace to where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in. a - bide with us, our Lord Im - man - u - el! oh, come to us,

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835-1893

Music: ST. LOUIS, Lewis H. Redner, 1831-1908



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:

Incarnate God, you are among us at this table. May we treasure this gift and ponder in our heart the mystery of your presence. Move us to discover the wonders of your love in the everyday moments of our lives, through Christ born in us.

Amen.

+ SHARING OF THE LIGHT +

Individual candles will be lit during the anthem that precedes the carol.

Always tilt the unlit candle to receive the light.

The lights will be dimmed in the sanctuary.

ANTHEM

"Wonderful Peace" Nordqvist; arr. Davison Sanctuary Choir & Instrumentalists

Please stand, as you are able.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH John 1:1, 3-4, 14

Let us confess our faith in the Son of God:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

All things came into being through him,

and without him not one thing came into being.

In him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

The Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. Amen.

CANDLELIGHT HYMN

Silent Night, Holy Night! ELW 281 (harmony) Found on p. 18



Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792–1849; tr. John F. Young, 1820–1885 Music: STILLE NACHT, Franz Gruber, 1787–1863

+ SENDING +

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

BENEDICTION

The triune God, glorious Mystery, holy Incarnate One, abiding Comforter, + bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy.

Amen.

Please extinguish your candle and hold it upright until the wax is set before laying it down on the pew.

SENDING CAROL

Joy to the World

ELW 267



Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

Music: ANTIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792-1872

DISMISSAL

Glory to God in the highest!

And peace to God's people on earth!

Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE "Carillon de Westminster" Louis Vierne

ASSISTING IN WORSHIP THIS EVENING

Assisting Minister: Jeanine Heath

Lector: Eric Mease

Bread Provider: Linda Brammer Altar Guild: Cheryl Johnson

Flower Guild: See listing on pp. 21-22

Please do not take poinsettias home with you until after the *Sounds of the Season* concert on Sunday, January 4, to be held at 4:00 PM.

Individual candles should be returned to the ushers or placed in the appropriate baskets in the narthex at the conclusion of the service.

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Given to the glory and praise of God by:

Keith and Cindy Bart Rich and Sue Wallden

In memory of:

My Parents, Eleanor and Edward Baldwin

Ken and Shirley Bareham

Jean Hess

Loved Ones

Rev. Dr. Michael Merkel

Parents, Frank Pluhar and Darleen Alayos

Richard Breder

John Cassar, Roy and Sylvia McQuin

Mom and Dad

Ruth Ann Chisholm

Walter Hagelstein

Don Davis and Karen Davis

William Zimmerman and Linda McDaniel

Our Parents and Margie

Loved Ones

Our Loved Ones

Our Loved Ones

Our Loved Ones

Paul and Gail Sober

Jean Mease and Mark Miller

Earl Melville Jr.

Given by:

Janice Baldwin Mike Bareham

Brenda and Dwight Baxter

Chris Breder

Richard Breder, Jr.

Rich and Kris Cassar

Marjorie Chin

Henry Chisholm

Nancy Davis

The Frigm Family

Bob and Ellen Garrison

Brenda Hagelstein

Jeanine and Geoff Heath

Gregory and Cheryl Johnson

Philip and Carol Keifer

Eric and Janet Mease

Earl Melville III

Our Dads, Michael and Donald

Tauno and Viola Palo, Roy's Parents Charles Bordeaux, Barbara's Father Our Son, Randy Our Parents and Other Loved Ones Ian-Siang and Loen-Che Liem

In honor of:

Jim Fitzpatrick
Our 25th Anniversary
Family
Francis Lew
Mike Bareham
Our Family
Charlene Hibbert
My Wife, Kyra Kaczmarczyk
Family and Friends
Our Mothers, Susan and Carol

Teddy, Grace and Maggie Olson Our children and grandchildren Christine and Teresa Therriault Merkel Roy and Barbara Palo

Dean and Ava Jo Shippy Ping-An and Jenny Tjoa

Given by:

Michael Bareham
Mary Beth & Jay Bergstrom
Laura Blenderman
Marjorie Chin
Lori Davis
Jeanine and Geoff Heath
Gregory and Cheryl Johnson
James Kaczmarczyk
Stu and Kathy Markham
Christine and Teresa
Therriault Merkel
Tom and Susie Olson
Keith and Kay Tyson





Schedule

JOIN US AT 10AM ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28 WE WILL SHARE A MEAL AND WORSHIP TOGETHER

BREAKFAST CHURCH

WITH HOLY COMMUNION IN FELLOWSHIP HALL



JOIN US AT 10AM ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 4
AS WE CELEBRATE THE FESTIVAL OF THE

EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD

WITH HOLY COMMUNION IN THE SANCTUARY



JOIN US ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON FOR OUR MUSIC MINISTRY'S ANNUAL

SOUNDS OF THE SEASON

CONCERT ON JANUARY 4 AT 4PM

"Lessons and Carols for Christmastide" will be presented by the Sanctuary Choir, Handbell Ensemble & Chamber Orchestra. There will be plenty of opportunities for audience participation.



A blessed Christmas and a happy New Year from the staff of St. Paul's Luthgran Church and School!



The Reverend Cris Frigm	302-368-0064 ext. 103
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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 office@stpaulsnewarkde.org. Late submissions will be shared the following week.











Electronic Giving



