

St. Paul Lutheran Church

Sunday, December 12, 2021

Welcome to St. Paul Lutheran Church. We are grateful to God you are here.

We pray that you will feel the Spirit and warm welcome of this faith community. We look forward to seeing you again.

3rd Sunday of Advent

The third symbolizes joy. It is called the "Shepherd's Candle." The third Sunday of Advent is Gaudete Sunday and is meant to remind us of the joy that the world experienced at the birth of Jesus, as well as the joy that the faithful have reached the midpoint of Advent.

Gathering

Prelude

Savior of the Nations, Come/Wexford Carol; arr. Timothy Shaw

Welcome

Gathering Hymn

ELW 239: *Hark, the Glad Sound*

**Hark, the glad sound! The Savior comes,
the Savior promised long;
let ev'ry heart prepare a throne
and ev'ry voice a song.**

**He comes the pris'ners to release,
in Satan's bondage held.
The gates of brass before him burst,
the iron fetters yield.**

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Reader One: Sometimes on our journey, our feet get heavy, our shoulders feel burdened, and our hearts seem slow. Sometimes in the preparation, the busyness overwhelms us, and we get lost in the doing and the planning and the running. And what we lose is a sense of why. Why do we do all of this? Why is this journey necessary? And the answer is simple: for the joy of it. We forget the joy when we get caught up in the to-do lists. We forget the joy when we worry more about how things look than connecting with others.

Reader Two: Matthew tells us that when John asked if Jesus was the one to come, Jesus responded by saying look around you. Our call in this Advent journey is to look around us to see the one who comes already at work among us and to celebrate that presence with joy.

Reader One: We light the candles of peace and hope and joy to light our way as we journey.
(Light three candles on the wreath.)

Reader Two: Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, that God may teach us the ways of peace and hope and joy.

Gathering Hymn, Continued

**He comes the broken heart to bind,
the bleeding soul to cure,
and with the treasures of his grace
to enrich the humble poor.**

**Our glad hosannas, Prince of peace,
your welcome shall proclaim,
and heav'n's eternal arches ring
with your beloved name.**

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who alone does wonders,
who lifts up the lowly,
who fills the hungry with good things.

All: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin, trusting in the tender mercy of our God.

**All: God for whom we wait,
in the presence of one another,
we confess our sin before you.**

**We fail in believing that your good news is for us.
We falter in our call to tend your creation.
We find our sense of self in material wealth.
We fear those different from ourselves.
We forget that we are your children
and turn away from your love.**

**Forgive us, Blessed One,
and assure us again of your saving grace.
Amen.**

P: God, in Christ Jesus, has looked with favor upon you!
Through the power of the Holy Spirit,
✠ your sins are forgiven.

You are children of the Most High,
inheritors of the eternal promise,
and recipients of divine mercy.
God strengthens you anew to follow the way of peace.
All: Amen.

Hymn

ELW 248: *People, Look East*

People, look east. The time is near
of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able,
trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east, and sing today—
Love, the Guest, is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim,
one more light the bowl shall brim,
shining beyond the frosty weather,
bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east, and sing today—
Love, the Star, is on the way.

Angels announce with shouts of mirth
him who brings new life to earth.
Set ev'ry peak and valley humming
with the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east, and sing today—
Love, the Lord, is on the way.

The Word

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

Prayer of the Day

P: Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

All: Amen.

First Reading

Isaiah 11: 1-5

The Peaceful Kingdom

- 1 A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
- 2 The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.
- 3 His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;
- 4 but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
- 5 Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

P: Word of God, Word of Life.

All: Thanks be to God

Gospel Acclamation



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? Al - le -
lu - ia. You have the words of e - ter - nal life.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 11: 2-8

²When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. ⁶And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

⁷As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

Message

What Do You Want For Christmas: Pastor Sam Wolff

Affirmation of Faith

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, Our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

In this season of watching and waiting, let us pray for all people and places that yearn for God's presence.

P: Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

The Meal

Holy Communion is a sacred and mysterious manifestation of God's love and grace for us. In Holy Communion the Father, Son and Holy Spirit invite us to share in the bond of peace and love they share with each other through repentant hearts and humble faith. All are invited to share in this gift of grace.

Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts,

All: We lift them to the Lord.

P: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Words of Institution

Lord's Prayer

**All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

All are Welcome to Share in this Meal

As the prophets of old knew, so may we also know: When we live by the Spirit, we will inherit the kingdom of God. The Spirit of love and forgiveness grows on the tree of life. This Spirit is available to all who seek it. Eat of this fruit, for it is the body of Christ, given for you.

Post Communion Prayer

P: Most High God,

you have come among us at this table.

By the Spirit's power, form us to be bearers of your word,
sharing gifts of mercy and grace with all,
through Christ Jesus, our host and our guest.

All: Amen.

Special Music

Snow on Snow; Maggie Koebele, Riley MacDonald, Kim Alswager

Sending

Announcements

Blessing

The God of hope
fill us with all joy and peace in believing,
so that we may abound in hope
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
through Christ Jesus for whom we wait.

All: Amen.

Sending Hymn

Mary's Boy Child

**Long time ago in Bethlehem
So the Holy Bible say
Mary's boy child, Jesus Christ
Was born on Christmas Day.**

**Hark now hear the angels sing
New King born today
And he will live for evermore
Because of Christmas Day.**

**While shepherds watched their flock by night,
They saw a bright new shining star
They heard a choir sing a song
The music came from afar.**

**Now Joseph and his wife Mary came to Bethlehem that night.
They found no place to bear her child,
Not a single room was in sight.**

**By and by they found a little nook
In a stable all forlorn,
And in a manger cold and dark,
Mary's little boy was born.**

**Hark, now hear the angels sing,
New King born today,
And we will live for evermore,
Because of Christmas Day.**

**Trumpets sound and angels sing,
Listen to what they say!
That we will live forevermore,
Because of Christmas Day!**

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Christ is near.

All: Thanks be to God.

Thank you for celebrating God's love with us today.

Fill my heart with Your abiding joy so that I may rejoice in life's circumstances,
in periods of plenty and during those seasons when I have very little, in times
of hardship as well as those times of great sufficiency. Amen