



From the staff at St. Paul Lutheran – to all of you!

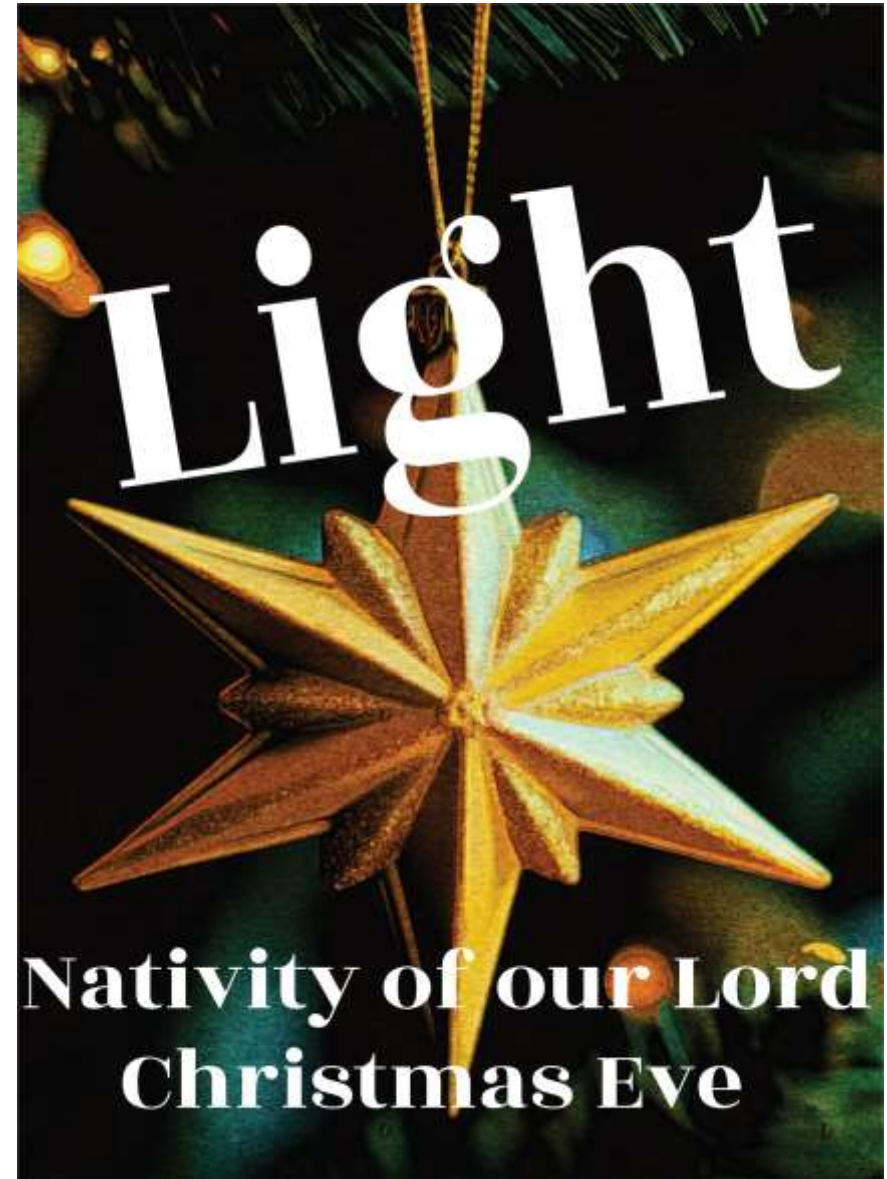
Sue Dirks

Shawn Andrews

Dawn Zeigler

Julie Woessner

Gabby Law



**Tuesday, December 24, 2024
8:00 p.m.**

Welcome to St. Paul Lutheran Church

It is a joy to gather together for worship!

St. Paul Purpose Statement

Living Christ centered lives so we may love all, serve our community, and share the Word.

Sunday Worship Schedule

9:00 a.m. In-person worship with Holy Communion

10:00 a.m. In-person Sunday School – September – May

Communion

We celebrate Jesus' presence each week in Holy Communion. This is the Lord's Supper and Jesus invites us: whether you are a lifelong Lutheran, or just considering Christianity; if you are an infant or elderly; if your family has been in the United States for generations, or has only recently arrived; if you are LGBTQIA+ or straight; if you live with disabilities, chronic illness, or are able-bodied and currently healthy; if you are home-blessed or homeless; ... YOU are welcome at God's meal of grace at St. Paul.

Accessibility

Handicap parking, entrance, wheelchair, and restrooms are available. Sound amplifiers and large print bulletins are available. Please ask an usher for assistance.

Children's Offering

The December children's offering will be for the God's Global Barnyard through the ELCA Good Gifts. A gift to God's Global Barnyard will be used where needed most to support livestock, agriculture and other sustainable-development projects, which help farmers and families with the resources they need to thrive.

1701 16th Ave. Sterling, IL 61081

815-625-3069

Church email: stpaulsterling@comcast.net

www.stpaulsterling.com

Prelude

"In the Bleak Midwinter"

arr. Brian Dean

"Jesus, Jesus, Rest Your Head"

arr. George Winston

"O Holy Night"

arr. Celeste Avery

Welcome/Announcements

GATHER

Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the Word made flesh, our life and our salvation.

All: Amen.

P: Trusting the goodness and lovingkindness of God our Savior, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: God of life, you promise good news of great joy for all people, and call us to be messengers of your peace. We confess that too often we hoard our joy, our resources, and our security. We nurture conflict and build barriers. We neglect the needs of our neighbors and ignore the groaning of creation. Have mercy on us. Where we are self-centered, open our hearts. Where we are reluctant, give us courage. Where we are cynical, restore our trust. Renew us with your grace and give us again the hope of eternal life in you.

All: Amen.

P: Hear the good news: We are children of God and heirs of God's promises through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In † Jesus we are forgiven and redeemed. Sing with joy, for all the ends of the earth shall know the salvation of God.

All: Amen.

Gathering Hymn

"O Come All Ye Faithful"

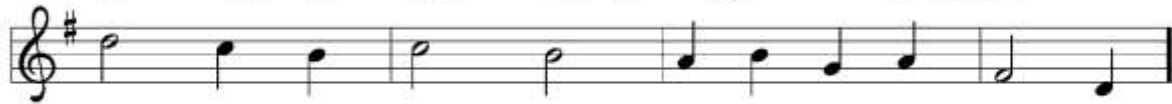
ELW #283



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
2 The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal,
3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;



come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes;
sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!
Je - sus, to thee be . . . glo - ry giv'n!



come and be - hold him, born the king of an - gels:
Son of the Fa - ther now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
Glo - ry to God . . . in . . . the . . . high - est:
Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

Refrain



Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,
O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,



ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.
O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

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

Lighting of the Advent Wreath*

Family: This is the last time this year we will light the Advent candles.

(Light all four candles)

Family: For four weeks the candles have been burning as we thought about hope, peace, joy and love. These are the gifts which Jesus Brought to us at Christmas time. The waiting is over and Jesus is Born. Each week another candle glowed and our wreath has shone more brightly. Today we light the Christ candle, the candle which represents Jesus. It is the center of our wreath, just as Jesus is the center of our lives. Happy Birthday, Jesus.

(Light the Christ candle.)

All: God, our hearts sing with joy and praise because of Jesus. At this happy season we rejoice that Jesus came among us. By his birth and life, he has shown us that we are your people and that we are greatly loved. Help us to remember Christmas all year long by giving to others the gifts of life: hope, peace, joy and love, expressed in the works of our hands and hearts. Amen.

* from the Moravian Church in America

Advent Song

“O Come, O Come Emmanuel”



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, and or - der all things
3 O come, O come, O bright and morn - ing star, and bring us com - fort
4 O come, De - sire of Na - tions bind all peo - ples in one



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
far and nigh: to us the path of know - ledge to show,
fr - om a - far! Dis - pel the sh - a - dows in the night.
he - art and mind; bid en - vy strife and qu - arrels cease;



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
and teach us in her wa - ys to go. Re-joyce! Re-joyce!
and turn our dark-ness in - to light.
fill the whole world with hea - ns peace.



Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

Music: VENI EMMANUEL, French processional, 15th cent.
from Moravian Church in America

GREETING

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray together:

All: Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

First Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7

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 the nation, 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 His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace on 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.

R: Word of God, Word of Life,

All: Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Psalm 96

R: Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.

All: Sing to the LORD, bless the name of the LORD; proclaim God's salvation from day to day.

R: Declare God's glory among the nations and God's wonders among all peoples.

All: For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised, more to be feared than all gods.

R: As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; but you, O LORD, have made the heavens.

All: Majesty and magnificence are in your presence; power and splendor are in your sanctuary.

R: Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD honor and power.

All: Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the holy name; bring offerings and enter the courts of the LORD.

R: Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness; tremble before the LORD, all the earth.

All: Tell it out among the nations: "The LORD is king! The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved will judge the peoples with equity."

R: Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that is therein.

All: Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your coming, O LORD, for you come to judge the earth.

R: You will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with your truth.

Second Reading: Titus 2:11-14

¹¹ The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹² training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, ¹³ while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴ He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

R: Word of God, Word of Life,

All: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

"Angels We Have Heard on High"

ELW #289

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.

Refrain

Glo - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o; glo - ri - a

ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

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

Gospel: Luke 2:1-20

P: The Holy Gospel according to Luke the 2nd chapter

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ In those days a decree went out from Emperor 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 for them in the inn.

⁸ In that 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!”

whom he favors!”

Special Music

“What Child Is This”

arr. Chris Rice

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 But 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, as it had been told them.

P: The Gospel of the Lord

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Hymn of the Day

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

ELW #279

Congregation will sing verses 1, 2, and 4



O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!
For Christ is born of Mar - y, and, gath - ered all a - bove
How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly the won - drous gift is giv'n!
O 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 by;
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.
cast out our sin, and en - ter in, be born in us to - day.



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,
No ear may hear his com - ing; but, in this world of sin,
We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad tid - ings tell;



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

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835–1893

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

Prayers of Intercession

P: Filled with good news of great joy, let us offer our prayers for the church, the earth, and all people.

Each petition ends with these words:

P: God of grace,

All: receive our prayer.

Peace

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

All: And also with you!

P: Let us share a sign of Christ's peace in whatever way you are comfortable.

MEAL

Special Music

"On Christmas Night All Christians Sing"

arr. Lloyd Conley

Offering Prayer

P: God of abundance, receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.

All: Amen.

Dialogue

P: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

Words of Institution

P: Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life: Blessed are you for the birth of creation. Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light. Blessed are you for your promise to your people. Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams. Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will. Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

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.

P: Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

All: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

P: With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming.

All: Come, Lord Jesus.

P: Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.

All: Come, Holy Spirit.

P: All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.

All: Amen.

Lord's Prayer

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**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.**

Invitation to Communion

P: Taste and see that the Lord is good. In Christ's manger, at Christ's table, come, see what God makes known for you.

Communion

Communion Music

"Jesus, Name Above All Names"

Sing through twice

Je - sus, name a - bove all names, beau - ti - ful
Sav - ior, glo - ri - ous Lord,
Em - man - u - el, God is with us,
bless - ed Re - deem - er, liv - ing Word.

The musical score is written on four staves in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 12/8. The lyrics are placed below the notes. The first line of music corresponds to the first line of lyrics, and so on. The final note of the fourth line has a fermata above it.

Text and music: Patricia Cain
Text and music © 1974 Scripture in Song, a division of Integrity Music, Inc.

"See Amid the Winter's Snow"

arr. Lloyd Larson

Prayer after Communion

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace.

All: Amen.

P: Let us pray.

God our redeemer, you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

All: Amen

The Candlelighting

Lighted candles should be held upright. Dip unlit candles toward the lighted candle

Lesson of Light

P: The Gospel of John the 1st chapter.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with 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 light shines in the darkness,

All: and the darkness did not overcome it.

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

ELW # 281 (candle lighting)

Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child.

Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar,
heav'nly hosts sing, alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!

Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
(raise candles here)

radiant beams from your holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

P: And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory,

All: the glory of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.

Extinguish your candle

Blessing

P: God bless you and keep you, † Jesus grant you grace and truth, and the Spirit send peace upon your hearts, now and forever.

All: Amen.

Dismissal

P: Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.

All: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

“Tidings of Joy!”

arr. Lloyd Larson

We Remember in Prayer; those on our Home Visitation list and those on our prayer list: Steven Julifs, Phyllis Jacobson, JoAnn Garcia, Barb Lenn, Lori Dewey, Betty Steinke, Michael Harting, Larry Wahler, JoDell Cruz, Sandy Julifs, and Lila Edeus.

Placing our confidence in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection of our loved ones, we extend our sympathy to the family and friends of Brenda Shore. Brenda passed away on Saturday, December 21. Services will be held at Schilling Funeral Home on Saturday, December 28th from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. with a short service to follow the visitation. Brenda is JJ Shore's mother.

May God's presence bring you comfort and peace.

Worship Assistants:

Presider: Pastor Kathy Burkheimer

Opener/Head Usher/Closer – David Carrillo

Advent Readers – Platz family

Acolytes – Platz family

Greeters – Jim Gorman, Greg Zeigler

Reader – Jim Gorman

Ushers – Jim Gorman, Tim Zollinger

Sound – Greg Zeigler

A special thank you to tonight's musicians:

Luke Steinke
Julie Woessner
Amy Zeigler
Gabe Zeigler
Dawn Zeigler

Next week – December 29

Lessons and Carols
Opener/Head Usher/Closer – David Carrillo
Acolytes – Arians family
Greeters/Ushers/Readers – Keith Peugh, Greg Zeigler
Sound – Bradyn Arians
Coffee Fellowship – Cox family

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Part of the ministry we share includes providing a worship space that gives glory to God. Especially in this, one of our highest festival occasions, we decorate with particular detail. Thanks to the following people for the donation of poinsettias, a symbol of the season:

Jerry & Khe Crofts in memory of Heather Crofts
John Renner in memory of Julie Renner
Dianne Stern Miller in memory family
Leta VanZuiden in memory of Merwyn VanZuiden, Harry & Ann Landheer, Richard Landheer
Nancy Beck in memory of Dave, David, George & Sylvia Day
Ron & Janie Billings in memory of our parents
Gary Fields in memory of Marcia Fields
Bob & Judy Bartel & family; Steve & Janelle Bartel & family; Dan & Susan Bartel & family; Dave & Donna Kendall & family; Tracy & Jason Volk & family in memory of Ruth & Don Stern and Mabel Rohde
Jim & Cheryl Gorman in memory of Geraldine Chismarick, Bob & Shirley Gorman
Nancy Eilers in memory of Lee Eilers

Verges & Noreen Aageson & family in memory of Ken & Miriam Chubb, Dr. Carl & Minna Wiederanders

Scot, Berta & Jacob Beyer in memory of Allan Beyer, Blanch Slifer, our sisters

Myra Oelrichs in memory of Ralph & Phyllis Oelrichs

Sandy, David & Steven Julifs in memory of Harold Julifs

Julie Woessner & Randy DeJonge in memory of Bob Woessner, Bob Wasmund, & Rhonda DeJonge

Tim & Chrissy Zollinger in memory of Dan Duchemin

Patty & Mark Arians in memory of Mary & John Doty, Vernon Johnson, Rhonda Johnson, Ronnie Johnson, Betty Arians & Gladys Stern

Dianne Miller in honor all our pastors and leaders

Nancy Beck in honor of Kinley, Rylie, Ezra, Rosie, Kanan & Rory

Nancy Eilers in honor of our grandchildren

Scot, Berta & Jacob Beyer in honor of Lucille Beyer

If you ordered a poinsettia and would like to take it home, you may do so following the worship service.