

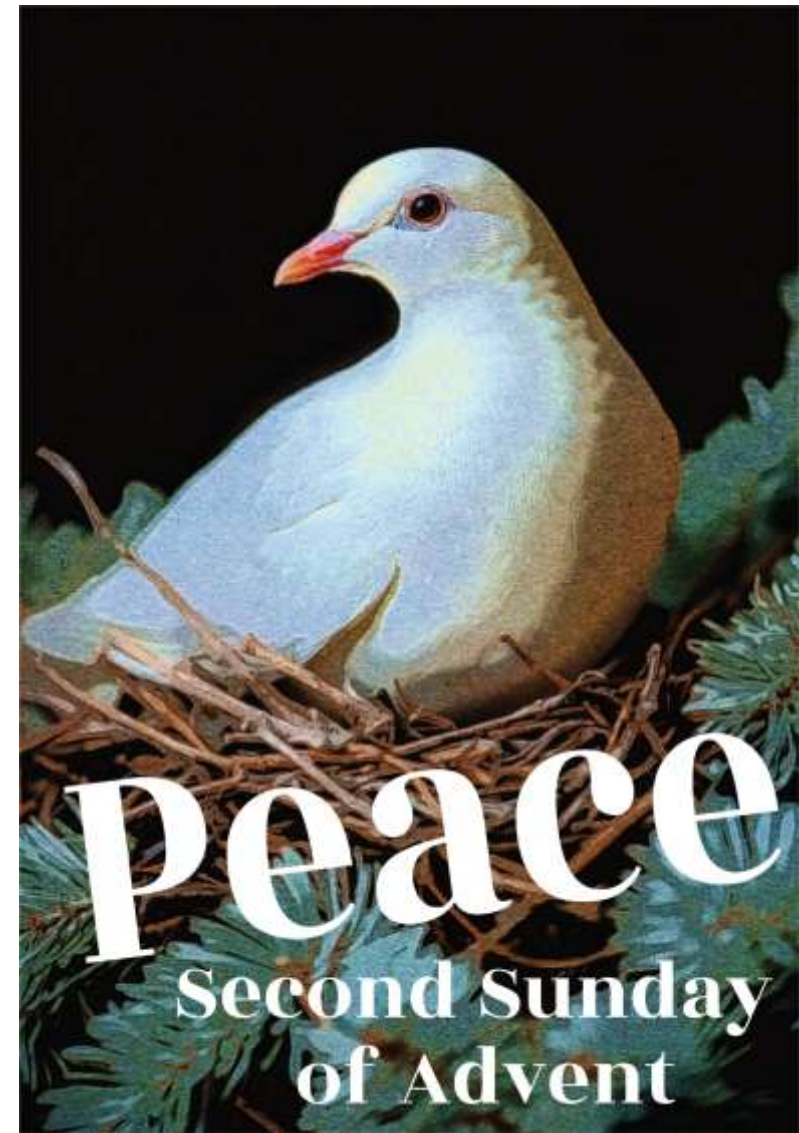
JOIN US FOR A

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

DECEMBER 15, 2024
BEGINS AT 9:00 AM

St. Paul Lutheran Church
1701 16th Ave, Sterling, IL

Join us this holiday season for St. Paul's Christmas program. Worship will be led by our youth. Bring your family and friends as we come together in fellowship, sharing the love and light of Christ. Enjoy festive treats and the warmth of our community as we honor this cherished time of year. Mark your calendars and be part of our joyful gathering!



**Sunday, December 8, 2024
9:00 a.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

"Immanuel (from the Squalor of a Lowly Stable)"

Carol Tornquist

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, alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon.

All: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: God of mercy, we confess that we have sinned. We trust earthly powers and human authority alone. We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts. God of might, we confess that we have sinned. We have turned away from our neighbors. We have trusted false promises. God in our midst, we confess that we have sinned. We plead: come to us. Bring your mercy to birth in us. A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through † Christ Jesus, whose day draws near.

All: Amen.

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.

Gathering Hymn
“He Came Down”
 ELW #253



1 He came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love;
 2 He came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light;
 3 He came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may have peace;
 4 He came down that we may have joy; he came down that we may have joy;



he came down that we may have love;
 he came down that we may have light; hal - le - lu - jah for - ev - er - more.
 he came down that we may have peace;
 he came down that we may have joy;

Text: Cameroon traditional
 Music: HE CAME DOWN, Cameroon traditional

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray together:

All: Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming give to all the people of the world knowledge of your salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

First Reading: Malachi 3:1-4

¹ See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. ² But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap; ³ he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to

the LORD in righteousness. ⁴ Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

R: Word of God, Word of Life,

All: Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Luke 1:68-79

R: Blessed are you, Lord, the God of Israel, you have come to your people and set them free.

All: You have raised up for us a mighty Savior, born of the house of your servant David.

R: Through your holy prophets, you promised of old to save us from our enemies, from the hands of all who hate us,

All: to show mercy to our forebears, and to remember your holy covenant.

R: This was the oath you swore to our father Abraham: to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

All: free to worship you without fear, holy and righteous before you, all the days of our life.

R: And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, or you will go before the Lord to prepare the way,

All: to give God’s people knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins.

R: In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

All: to shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Advent Alleluia



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia

Gospel: Luke 3:1-6

P: The Holy Gospel according to Luke the 3rd chapter

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, ²during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.

⁵Every valley shall be filled,
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
and the crooked shall be made straight,
and the rough ways made smooth;

⁶and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’”

P: The Gospel of the Lord

All: Praise to you, O Christ.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath*

Family: Last Sunday we lit the first candle in our Advent Wreath, the candle of hope. Let us light it again to show that our hope continues.

(Light the first candle.)

All: John the Baptist called on the people of his day to prepare the path for the coming of the Messiah. He called them to repent, turn around, change their ways. To live in peace with others, we need to repent and change directions.

Family: We light this second candle to remind us that Jesus is the Prince of Peace. He shows us how to share God’s peace with others.

(Light the second candle.)

Family: The prayer of St. Francis asks God to help us be peacemakers. Let us say it together:

All: Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; Where there is injury, pardon; Where there is doubt, faith; Where there is despair, hope; Where there is sadness, joy; And where there is darkness, light. Grant that we may seek not so much to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive, in pardoning that we are pardoned, and in dying that we are born to eternal life. 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

Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
 far and nigh: to us the path of know - ledge to show,

Refrain
 un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 and teach us in her wa - ys to go. Re-joyce! Re-joyce!

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

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

Sermon

Hymn of the Day

“Prepare the Royal Highway”

ELW #264



1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!
2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing; your own e - ter - nal king!
3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.



Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!
Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!
Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.
His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:
God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!
All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:
So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:



Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772–1847; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
Music: BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN, Swedish folk tune, 17th cent.
Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress

Prayers of Intercession

P: As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.

Each petition ends with these words:

P: Merciful God,

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

Offering

“Emmanuel”

arr. Laura E. Wasson

Offering Prayer

P: Creator God, you made the whole world, even the farthest stars, and you draw near to feed us. We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine. Strengthen us with this food that we may live in expectation for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

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

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

Words of Institution

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: Behold, God is making all things new. Take your place in the new creation.

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 G major (one sharp) and 8/8 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below the notes. The first line is 'Je - sus, name a - bove all names, beau - ti - ful'. The second line is 'Sav - ior, glo - ri - ous Lord,'. The third line is 'Em - man - u - el, God is with us,'. The fourth line is 'bless - ed Re - deem - er, liv - ing Word.' There is a fermata over the final note of the fourth line.

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

“We Wait for Messiah” Franklin Ritter

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.

Generous God, we thank you for the gift of life, for the bread of salvation. We thank you for coming among us, for leading us into peace. We thank you for showering us with mercy, for sending us into the world. Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us as we feed the hungry in your name.

All: Amen

Blessing

God of endings and beginnings, God in the darkness and the light, God, our hope for the journey, ✠ bless and keep you now and forever.

All: Amen.

Sending Song

“Hark, the Glad Sound!”

ELW #239



1 Hark, the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, the Sav - ior
2 He comes the pris - 'ners to re - lease, in Sa - tan's
3 He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, the bleed - ing
4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of peace, your wel - come



prom - ised long; let ev - 'ry heart pre -
bond - age held. The gates of brass be -
soul to cure, and with the trea - sures
shall pro - claim, and heav'n's e - ter - nal



pare a throne and ev - 'ry voice a song.
fore him burst, the i - ron fet - ters yield.
of his grace to en - rich the hum - ble poor.
arch - es ring with your be - lov - ed name.

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702–1751

Music: CHESTERFIELD, Thomas Haweis, 1734–1820

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.

All: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

“All Earth Is Hopeful”

arr. Krenz Organ

We Remember in Prayer; those on our Home Visitation list and those on our prayer list: Steven Julifs, Bev Julien, 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 Raymond (Scott) & Deana Seely. They passed away on Thursday, November 28. A family gathering will take place on December 8.

May God's presence bring you comfort and peace.

Coffee Fellowship will be served following worship this morning in the Fellowship Hall by Bill & Carolyn Duncan. All are welcome!

Worship Assistants:

Presider: Pastor Kathy Burkheimer

Opener/Head Usher/Closer – Greg Zeigler

Advent Readers – Bartel family

Acolytes – Bartel family

Greeters – Bartel family

Ushers – Diane Yoeckel, Gary Fields

Reader – Marilyn Geiger

Sound – Bradyn Arians

Altar Guild – Debbie O'Brien, Diane Yoeckel

Musicians:

Live: Julie Woessner

Recorded: Dawn Zeigler

Next week – December 15

Christmas Program

Presider: Pastor Kathy Burkheimer

Opener/Head Usher/Closer – Stacey Avelar

Advent Readers – Avelar family

Acolytes – Avelar family

Greeters – Dan Dir, Susan Kuehl

Ushers – Diane Yoeckel, Gary Fields

Sound – Greg Zeigler

Altar Guild – Debbie O'Brien, Diane Yoeckel

Coffee Fellowship – Mary Ordean

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