

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT



December 5, 2021

ST. PAUL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

WELCOME TO ST. PAUL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

We are happy you have joined us for worship today. Wherever you are on your journey with or toward God, you are welcome here—you are a blessing to this assembly.

We welcome all who are seeking God's love and grace. We welcome all because God welcomes all, regardless of race or culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or relationship status. We welcome all without regard to addictions, physical or mental health, imprisonment, socio-economic circumstances, or anything that too often divides us. Our unity is in Christ.

Lutherans believe, teach, and confess that in, with, and under the bread and wine in Holy Communion we receive the true Body and Blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation. All who are drawn in faith are welcome to join in this confession and receive the Sacrament.

We invite and encourage your full participation in our worship this morning. With this service bulletin you can follow and participate in this morning's liturgy.

New to St. Paul? Ready to make it your own? Questions about St. Paul, including transferring membership from another Lutheran church, or for beginning the process for baptism, confirmation, reception, or transferring from one of the other Christian traditions, may be directed to the Church Office at 781-646-7773 or parishadmin@stpaularlington.org.

COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

The following guidelines are in place to keep all of us safe and healthy. Thank you for your cooperation in showing love to our neighbors. Adjustments will be made as needed moving forward.

Masks: Everyone (except children age 2 and under) are required to wear a face covering.

Physical Distancing: Maintain physical distancing (six feet or more) between households while inside the building. Do not congest or linger in hallways. Offerings may be left in the Narthex. At the end of the service, you will be dismissed row by row, from both the front and the back. Please remain seated during the postlude and follow the directions of the clergy and ushers.

Ventilation: Windows will remain open while the building is in use. As colder weather approaches, please remember to dress warmly. Coffee Hour will be held outdoors after the 10:30am service.

Singing: Masked, fully vaccinated attendees are welcome to sing at the 10:30am service only. The 8:15am service will be a spoken service with no singing.

More details about our Covid-19 Protocols can be found on our website.

*As we prepare for God's presence in worship, please be aware that some prefer to be quiet at this time.
When the instruction for standing * appears, please stand as you are able and as seems comfortable.
At the ✠, you may make the sign of the cross, which reminds us of our baptism.
The congregational responses are printed in **bold**.*

GATHERING

*The Chancel Flowers are given by Nicole Rura
to the glory of God.*

PRELUDE

Preludium IV

William Herschel
(1738–1822)

WELCOME

* CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

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.**

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.

Amen.

* GATHERING HYMN

“Comfort, Comfort Now My People”

ELW 256



1 “Com - fort, com-fort now my peo - ple; tell of peace!” So says our God.
2 For the her-ald’s voice is cry - ing in the des - ert far and near,
3 Straight shall be what long was crook - ed, and the rough - er plac - es plain.



Com-fort those who sit in dark - ness mourn-ing un - der sor - row’s load.
call - ing us to true re - pen - tance, since the reign of God is here.
Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, as be-fits God’s ho - ly reign.



To God’s peo - ple now pro-claim that God’s par - don waits for them!
Oh, that warn - ing cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way.
For the glo - ry of the Lord now on earth is shed a - broad,



Tell them that their war is o - ver; God will reign in peace for - ev - er.
Val - leys, rise to greet the Sav - ior; hills, bow down in hum-ble fa - vor.
and all flesh shall see the to - ken that God’s word is nev - er bro - ken.

Text: Johann G. Olearius, 1635–1711; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.
Music: FREU DICH SEHR, *Trente quatre pseauxes de David*, Geneva, 1551

* GREETING

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

And also with you.

* LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

We praise you, O God, for this circle of light that marks our days of preparation for Christ’s
advent. As we light the candles on this wreath, kindle within us the fire of your Spirit, that
we may be light shining in the darkness. Enlighten us with your grace, that we may
welcome others as you have welcomed us. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose
coming is certain and whose day draws near.

Amen.

* HYMN DURING THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” (*stanzas 3 & 4 only*)

ELW 257



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
 2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things
 3 O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on
 4 O come, O Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
 far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;
 Si - nai's height in an - cient times you gave the law
 tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save,



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 teach us your will and guide our way.
 in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe. Re-joice! Re-joice!
 and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.



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

Text: *Psalterium Cantionum Catholicarum*, Köln, 1710; tr. composite
 Music: VENI EMMANUEL, French processional, 15th cent.
 Text sts. 2, 6, 7 © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.

* PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.

WORD

FIRST READING

Malachi 3:1-4

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. 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; 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. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

LUKE 1:68-79

Blessed are you, Lord, the God of Israel, you have come to your people and set them free.
You have raised up for us a mighty Savior, born of the house of your servant David.

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

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

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

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

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

to give God's people knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins.

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

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

I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

* GOSPEL ACCLAMATION at 10:30am

ELW 169



Music: Bob Moore, b. 1962
Music © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.

* GOSPEL

Luke 3:1–6

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

In 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, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as 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. Every 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; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S TIME at 10:30am

Pastor Ross Goodman

SERMON: "Location, Location, Location"

Pastor Ross Goodman

* HYMN OF THE DAY

“There’s a Voice in the Wilderness”

ELW 255

1 There's a voice in the wil - der - ness cry - ing, a
2 O Je - ru - sa - lem, her - ald good tid - ings, as -
3 But the word of our Sav - ior is faith - ful, the

call from the ways un - trod: Pre - pare in the des - ert a
cend to the heights and sing! Pro - claim to a des - o - late
arm of our God is strong, who stands in the midst of the

high - way, a high - way for our God!
peo - ple the com - ing of their king.
na - tions and soon will right the wrong.

The val - leys shall be ex - alt - ed, the
Like flow'rs of the field we per - ish, like
Lord, feed your flock like a shep - herd, the

loft - y hills brought low; make straight all the crook - ed
grass our works de - cay; the pow'r and the pomp of
lambs so gent - ly hold; in pas - tures of peace now

plac - es where God, our God, may go!
na - tions shall pass like a dream a - way.
lead them, and bring them to your fold.

Text: James Lewis Milligan, 1876-1961, alt.
Music: ASCENSION, Henry Hugh Bancroft, 1904-1988
Music © Estate of Eldred Bancroft. B. Burrows, Executor.

* APOSTLES' CREED

In response to the gospel, let us confess the faith of the church:

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, 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, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come 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.

A brief silence.

You send messengers into the world to proclaim the day of your coming. Make our bishops, pastors, deacons, and lay preachers confident in their preaching, that their words and our lives witness to your grace. Inspire the leaders of this congregation, the Cambridge Korean Presbyterian Church, and the Sichem Temple. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Send your Spirit to all living creatures that are endangered. Provide them with shelter and care, and bring us into right relationship with the earth that you create and call good. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Send leaders to our nations, cities, schools, and businesses to work on behalf of those who have lost parents, spouses, and loved ones; immigrants; the imprisoned; those living in poverty; and all who are oppressed. Make them bold in their commitments to justice and reconciliation. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Send your servants to care for those who suffer. Use our ministries and our lives to reach out with compassion to those who are hungry, oppressed, lonely, or ill, especially Anne-Louise, Beverly, Dan, Ed, Elna, Heikki, Janna, Jeff, Jeffrey, John, Lois, Lorraine, Lynn, Meredith, and Paul. Grant them healing and wholeness. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Send prophets to speak difficult truths, even when they are poorly received. Embolden those who ask hard questions and challenge accepted ways. Instill in youth and elders alike a passion for pointing to Jesus in all things. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We remember your saints, both those publicly celebrated and those more humbly remembered. Confident that your work will be completed, we live in faith until the day of your coming. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of new life, you come among us in the places we least expect. Receive these prayers and those of our hearts, in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

* PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

MEAL

TEMPLE TALK

OFFERTORY ANTHEM *at 10:30am*

“On Jordan’s Bank”

Malcolm Archer

(b. 1952)

1. On Jordan’s bank the Baptist’s cry
Announces that the Lord is nigh;
Awake and hearken, for he brings
Glad tidings from the King of kings!

2. Then cleansed be every Christian breast,
And furnished for so great a guest!
Yea, let us each out heart prepare
For Christ to come and enter there.

3. For thou art our salvation, Lord,
Our refuge, and our great reward;
Without thy grace we waste away
Like flowers that wither and decay.

4. All praise, eternal Son, to thee
Whose advent sets thy people free,
Whom, with the Father, we adore,
And Holy Ghost for evermore.

Charles Coffin (*translated John Chandler*)

* OFFERING PRAYER

God of our waiting and watching, we offer the gifts of our hearts and our lives to the service of all your people. Prepare the way before us as we meet you in this simple meal, through Christ Jesus, our pathway and our peace.

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. 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:

Holy, holy, holy Lord. God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Holy God, the Beginning and the End, our Salvation and our Hope, we praise you for creating a world of order and beauty.

When we brought on chaos, cruelty and despair, you sent the prophets to proclaim your justice and mercy.

At this end of the ages your Son Jesus came to bring us your love and to heal all the suffering world.

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.

Send your Spirit on us and on this bread and wine we share: strengthen our faith, increase our hope, and bring to birth the justice and joy of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever.

Amen.

* LORD'S PRAYER

Feel free to say this prayer in the language in which you first learned it, or in one of these translations:

**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.**

**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.**

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION *(said by online attendees)*

Come, Lord Jesus, and dwell in my heart in the fullness of your strength. I believe that you are truly present in the Holy Sacrament, and since I cannot at this time receive communion, I pray that you come spiritually into my heart. I unite myself with you and embrace you with all my heart, soul, and mind. Let nothing separate me from you until, by your grace, I come to your glorious kingdom of unending peace. Amen.

COMMUNION

All are welcome to receive the bread and wine as the choir sings the Agnus Dei. An usher will collect your cups.

* TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
Amen.

* PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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.
Amen.

SENDING

* 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.

Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

* SENDING HYMN

“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

* DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is near.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Veni redemptor gentium, SSWV 149

Samuel Scheidt
(1587–1654)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Below are highlights from our announcements this week. For more information, please see our Weekly Update email. You can subscribe from our website (stpaularlington.org—click SUBSCRIBE in the navigation menu at the top of the page) or like us on Facebook! Please send announcements via email to parishadmin@stpaularlington.org by noon on Wednesday for inclusion in the coming Sunday's bulletin. Announcements received after that will be published the following week.

Adult Forum | Sundays at 9:15am in the Fellowship Hall

Today: Advent Preparation–Daily Inventory with Pastor Liz Senft

December 12: Advent Apocalypse with Pastor Liz Senft

December 19: Magnificat Bible Study (Luke 1:39–55) with Pastor Ross Goodman

December 29 and January 2: No forum.

Ascentria Giving Tree | This season, St. Paul will support the Unaccompanied Refugee Minors Program. Email Kim Fechtel (kfechtel@comcast.net) sign up for certain gifts and drop them off at church by December 12!



SAINT PAUL

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
ARLINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS

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ST. PAUL STAFF

The Reverend Ross Goodman, *Pastor*
The Reverend Liz Senft, *Pastoral Associate*
W. Roger Randolph III, *Vicar*
Ryan Patten, *Director of Music & Organist*
Kourtni Patten, *Director of Children, Youth, & Families*
Toni Sacco, *Interim Parish Administrator*
Paul Ricci, *Business Administrator*
Dennis O'Brien, *Church Property Manager*

OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday, 9am–3pm



Evangelical Lutheran
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God's work. Our hands.



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