THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT LESSONS & CAROLS

10:30 a.m.



December 14, 2025

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Welcome to ST. PAUL 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? If you have questions or want more information, please fill out a newcomer form with the QR code at the right. Questions about transferring membership from another Lutheran church, or for beginning the process for baptism, confirmation, membership, or transferring from one of the other Christian traditions, may be directed to the Church Office at 781-646-7773 or parishadmin@stpaularlington.org.





SUNDAY SERVICE

8:15am | Service with Holy Communion in Nave

9:00am | Choir Practice

9:30am | Education Hour with Sunday School, Adult

Forum, Confirmation

10:30am | Lessons & Carols Concert

11:30am | Coffee Hour

LIVESTREAMING

Worship is streamed on the St. Paul Lutheran Arlington Facebook page. A Facebook account is not necessary to stream, however, without a Facebook account the stream works on a computer browser only and not on a phone.

SERVING THE COMMUNITY TODAY:

Marie Breitenback, Kelli Oliver & Kim Fectel, *Altar Guild* Jordan M.S. and Toby M., *Acolytes* Gretchen Stark, *Lector* Kerri Frick, *Deacon* Andy Airasian and Dan Ries, *Ushers* Hollie Schmidt & Mat Carter, *Livestream Broadcast Team* Peter & Hollie Schmidt & Lisa Chiulli Lay, *Coffee Guild*

Today's altar flowers are given in loving memory of Bishop Ehme Rankin Osterbur, beloved father, father-in-law and grandfather and life-long servant in the ELCA.

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

PRELUDE

Joy of Every Longing Heart

Arranged by Lloyd Larson

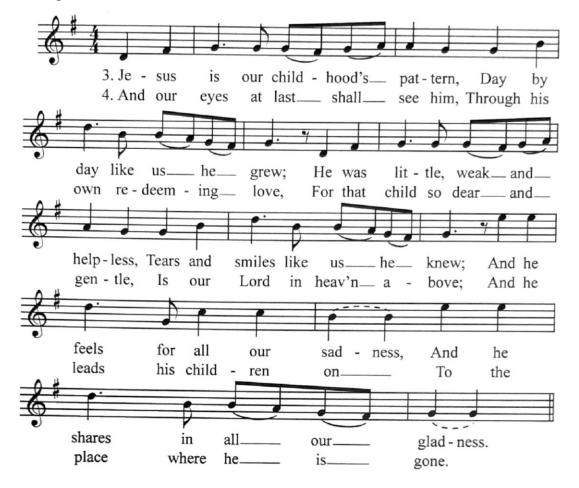
Mark Olson, trumpet

WELCOME

CAROL (WITH CONGREGATION)

Once in Royal David's City

The choir sings verses 1 & 2



*BIDDING PRAYER

Beloved in Christ, as we await the great festival of Christmas, let us prepare ourselves so that we may be shown its true meaning. Let us hear, in lessons from Holy Scripture, how the prophets of Israel yearned for the day when God would visit and redeem the waiting people. Let us rejoice, in our carols and hymns, that the good purpose of God is being mightily fulfilled. Let us celebrate the promise that our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, will bring all peoples and all things into the peace of God's eternal kingdom. The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

But first, let us pray for the world that God so loves, for those who have not heard the good news of God, or who do not believe it; for those who walk in darkness and the shadow of death; and for the Church in this place and everywhere, that it may be freed from all evil and fear, and may in pure joy lift up the light of the love of God. These prayers and praises let us humbly offer to God, in the words that Christ himself taught us.

Our Father, who art in heaven...

CAROL (WITH CONGREGATION)
O Come, O Come Emmanuel

 O come, O come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel,
 That mourns in lonely exile here Until the Son of God appear.

> Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!

> > 2. Choir only

Refrain: Everyone

3. O come, Desire of nations, bind All peoples in one heart and mind; Bid envy, strife, and discord cease; Fill the whole world with heaven's peace. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!

FIRST LESSON Genesis 3: 8-15

They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate." Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate." The Lord God said to the serpent,

"Because you have done this,
cursed are you among all animals
and among all wild creatures;
upon your belly you shall go,
and dust you shall eat
all the days of your life.
I will put enmity between you and the woman
and between your offspring and hers;
he will strike your head,
and you will strike his heel."

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

CAROL

Of the Father's Love Begotten/All Creatures of Our God and King

SECOND LESSON Isaiah 9: 2, 6, 7

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. 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. 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.**

CAROL

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

THIRD LESSON Isaiah 11: 1-3a, 4a, 6-9

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

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.

His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

With righteousness he shall judge for the poor and decide with equity for the oppressed of the earth.

The wolf shall live with the lamb; the leopard shall lie down with the kid; the calf and the lion will feed together, and a little child shall lead them.

The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

CAROL

People Look East/Prepare the Way, O Zion

CAROL (WITH CONGREGATION)

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

1. Good Christian friends, rejoice With heart, and soul, and voice; Give ye heed to what we say:
Jesus Christ is born today;
Ox and ass before him bow,
And he is in a manger now.
Christ is born today!
Christ is born today!

2. Choir only

3. Good Christian friends, rejoice With heart, and soul, and voice; Now ye need not fear the grave; Jesus Christ was born to save! Calls you one and calls you all To gain the everlasting hall. Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

FOURTH LESSON Luke 1: 26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

CAROL

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came/What Child Is This?

FIFTH LESSON Luke 2: 1, 3-7

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. All went to their own towns to be registered. 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. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. 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.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

CAROL (WITH CONGREGATION)

Angels, From the Realms of Glory/Angels We Have Heard on High

Angels, from the realms of glory,
 Winging flight o'er all the earth;
 Ye, who sang creation's story
 Now proclaim Messiah's birth:
 Come and worship, come and worship,
 Worship Christ, the newborn King!

Refrain: Choir only

2. Choir Only

3. All creation, join in praising
God the Father, Spirit, Son,
Evermore your voices raising
To th'eternal Three in One;
Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King!

Refrain: Choir only

SIXTH LESSON Luke 2: 8-16

Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 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: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest heaven,

and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

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." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

CAROL

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly/Silent Night, Holy Night

SEVENTH LESSON Matthew 2: 1-11

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:

'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah, for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'"

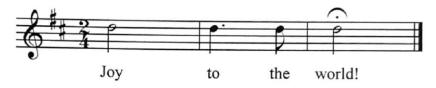
Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

*CAROL (WITH CONGREGATION)

Joy to the World/Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee

- Joy to the world! the Lord is come:
 Let earth receive her King;
 Let ev'ry heart prepare him room,
 and heav'n and nature sing,
 and heav'n and nature sing,
 and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.
- 2. Choir only Joyful, Joyful
- He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
 The glories of his righteousness, and wonders of his love,
 And wonders of his love,
 And wonders, wonders of his love.



*EIGHTH READING John 1: 1-5, 10-12, 14

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. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God. And 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.

*CAROL (WITH CONGREGATION)
O Come, All Ye Faithful

1. O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come, and behold him,
Born the King of angels,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!

2. Choir only

3. Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above.
Glory to God in the highest!
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!

*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

A brief silence.

God of power and mercy, we praise you for Jesus and his acts of healing and liberation. Lead us to proclaim the good news from generation to generation, that all may place their hope in you. God of grace, hear our prayer.

When lands are parched and dry, bring rain and snow; where wilderness is barren, sow seeds of life. Fill the lands with trees that grow, plants that flower, and creatures that thrive, as nature proclaims the wonder of your works. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

When there is injustice or corruption among nations and leaders, root it out. Turn their attention to inequity and the cries of the poor. Instill a deeper sense of compassion and care in all who govern. God of grace, **hear our prayer**.

When bodies weaken and hearts grow fearful, speak your blessing. We pray especially Bobby, Dan, Diane, George, Jim, Lynn, Meredith, Naomi, Paul, Roberta, and Susan. In uncertain times, remind us of the promise spoken to our ancestors in faith. God of grace, **hear our prayer**.

When people are imprisoned or held captive, break the chains and offer release. Strengthen the work of the church in restorative justice, breaking cycles of poverty, and welcoming the immigrant. Especially we pray for Ascentria and Global Refuge. God of grace, **hear our prayer**.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

As we await your coming, we give thanks for the faithful who have lived and died in faith especially Lucy, martyr at Syracuse, and John of the Cross. May their boldness of faith inspire our witness and work. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God for whom we wait, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with your Word. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor glory forever. Amen.

*PEACE

Keep your hands close together or make the peace sign if you'd rather not pass the peace with touch.

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

*THE BLESSING

May Christ who by his Incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with the sweetness of inward peace and goodwill; and the blessing of God, the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950 Music: REJOICE. REJOICE. Marty Haugen

*DISMISSAL

Life is short, and we do not have much time to gladden the hearts of those who travel with us. So be swift to love, make haste to be kind, and go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



You may give an offering through the Givelify app by scanning this QR code. You may also make an offering by placing a gift in the offering plate, which is in the narthex.

POSTLUDE Noel Festival

Arranged by Lloyd Larson

Mark Olson, trumpet

ANNOUNCEMENTS and UPCOMING HAPPENINGS at **SAINT PAUL**



GENTLE REMINDER: PLEDGES FOR 2026

The coming year promises an exciting new chapter in St. Paul's story: the call and welcome of the next Pastor. The Transition Team and the Congregation Council have been hard at work behind the scenes preparing for the next steps in the call process, the adoption of a Ministry Site Profile and the formation of a Call Committee in late January or early February.

You can help prepare the way for this next exciting chapter by pledging financial support for St. Paul's ministry in 2026. Pledges are being received now. You are invited to prayerfully consider making a generous pledge that will help the congregation and its next Pastor move into the future on a solid financial footing. If you are new to the congregation or have not pledged in the past for other reasons, please consider a pledge for the coming year. You may fill out the pledge form and mail it back to St. Paul or put it in the offering plate during worship on Sunday mornings. Alternatively, you can <u>click here</u> to fill out a virtual pledge card.

COOKIES FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

Calling all cookie bakers! Help St. Paul host a festive and welcoming coffee hour after each of our Christmas Eve services. If you're willing to bring 1-2 dozen Christmas cookies to share, please RSVP to Lisa at lisachiullilay@gmail.com and note which service, the 4pm or 8pm, you will be attending. Fresh fruit, or cheese & crackers, are also welcome!

ADULT FORUM | Sunday, December 14, 9:30

This Sunday Join us for a brainstorming/heart-searching conversation about the Adult Forum and its subjects for the coming months. We'll meet in the Goodman Fellowship Hall from 9:30-10:15am. All are invited to join the discussion!

PRAYER AROUND THE CROSS | Tuesdays in Advent (December 16) at 7PM

Advent, a season for contemplative reflection, coincides one of the busiest times of the secular year. As an oasis of time in a month that often feels like a whirlwind, we will offer Prayer Around the Cross on the first three Tuesdays of December at 7:00 PM in the sanctuary. Silence, simple song, readings, and prayer. As a tactile form of prayer, participants can light candles and place them in bowls filled with sand, placed around the cross. Our time together each week will be about 30 to 45 minutes long. Come as often as you can. This is not an imposition. It is an opportunity for those who crave the space for silence and contemplation.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP | December 24 at 4pm & 8pm

We will gather for worship on Christmas Eve, Wednesday December 24, at 4pm and 8pm. The 4pm service will include a special children's message. 8pm will be a candlelight service.

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT | December 21, 10:30 Service

St. Paul's annual Christmas Pageant will take place on Sunday, December 21 at the 10:30 service. We look forward to witnessing the story of Christ's birth told from the perspective of St. Paul's youngest disciples in word and song. If your child would like to participate, please contact Sarah Carter, Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministry, at stpaularlingtonfamily@gmail.com. Pageant rehearsal will take place during the education hour on December 14 and December 21.

ARLINGTON EATS DECEMBER NEEDS

At this time of year especially, we focus on baking at home. As you gather your own ingredients, please consider donating some to Arlington Eats. As always, thank you for being a part of our year-round food donors!

- Sugar
- Baking soda
- Baking powder
- Spices Cinnamon, Ground ginger, Garlic powder
- Baking chips (chocolate, etc)
- Cereal (especially Cheerios!)
- Laundry detergent sheets
- Dish soap

ST. PAUL BIBLE STUDY | Thursday Evenings, 7-8pm by Zoom

All are invited to join our bible study! We will gather on Thursday evenings on Zoom from 7-8pm. Each week, we will study the upcoming Sunday's lectionary texts, which are the bible readings we hear in worship. To access the readings and Zoom link, please see St. Paul's Weekly Update email. If you are not a subscriber, you can sign up on our website or email Vicar Sam for the Bible Study Zoom link (stpaularlingtonvicar@gmail.com).

THEOLOGY ON TAP | December 21, 4PM

We will gather once more at 4PM at Mighty Squirrel (411 Waverley Oaks Road, Waltham). Vicar Sam will lead a relaxed conversation about a different theological topic each month. The brewery welcomes families and includes alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages. All are invited!

SCHEDULE OF UPCOMING SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

| Advent 3 | Sunday, December 14 |
|----------|---|
| 8:15 AM | Holy Communion |
| 9:30 AM | Pageant rehearsal, confirmation, adult forum, choir |
| 10:30 AM | Lessons & Carols (No Communion) |
| Advent 4 | Sunday, December 21 |
| 8:15 AM | Holy Communion |

9:30 AM Pageant rehearsal, confirmation, adult forum, choir 10:30 AM Christmas Pageant with Holy Communion

Christmas Eve Wednesday, December 24 4:00 PM Festival Holy Communion 8:00 PM Festival Holy Communion

Coffee and Cookies after both services

| Holy Innocents | Sunday, December 28 |
|----------------|---|
| 9:30 AM | Holy Communion with Farewell & Godspeed |
| 10:30 AM | Celebration of Vicar Sam's Ministry |

| Epiphany | Sunday, January 4 |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| 8:15 AM | Holy Communion |
| 9:30 AM | Potluck Breakfast with Carols |
| 10:30 AM | Holy Communion |

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SAINT PAUL

LUTHERAN CHURCH

ARLINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS

www.stpaularlington.org | 781-646-7773

Staff

The Reverend Don Larsen, *Transition Pastor*Samantha Menapace, *Vicar*Ana Zecic Jeffers, *Director of Music*Sarah Carter, *Children, Youth and Families Director*Jennifer White, *Parish Administrator*Paul Ricci, *Business Administrator*Dennis O'Brien, *Church Property Manager*

stpaularlington.interim.pastor@gmail.com stpaularlingtonvicar@gmail.com anazecicjeffers@gmail.com stpaularlingtonfamily@gmail.com parishadmin@stpaularlington.org

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Mark Olson, Financial Secretary
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Pierson Oliver Taryn Walsh



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