

CHRISTMAS EVE
December 24, 2025
4:30 PM



In winter's deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the world and bring endless peace and justice. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ brings salvation to all people. The angels declare that Jesus' birth is good and joyful news for everyone, including lowly shepherds. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world.

St. Paul Lutheran Church
4686 E. Walnut Street
Westerville, OH 43081
614-882-7601
@splcwesterville
www.splcwesterville.org

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

ADORE HIM
St. Paul Praise Team

by Daniel Bashta, Hannah McClure
Paul McClure, & Sean Curran

PRELUDE MUSIC

GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

Zach Ruppel, Piano

arr. Charles Lindberg

***ALLEMANDE* FROM PARTITA, NO.2**

Dr. Philip Rudd, Violin

by J.S. Bach

GRACE OF GOD WITH US

Karla Kruse, Vocals

Zach Ruppel, Piano

Ashley and Dr. Philip Rudd, Cello and Violin

arr. Erik Foster

**HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING
O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL
WE THREE KINGS**

Caroline Baker, French Horn

Adalyn Gary, Clarinet

Piper Rackley, Baritone

arr. John O'Reilly & John Kinyon

LIGHTLY ROW

James Rudd, Piano

Folk Song

FOR ALWAYS

Christina Sidebottom, Orator

by Will Fish

NOEL

St. Paul Puppet Posse

HEAVENLY HOSTS

St. Paul Praise Team

by Tony Wood, Benjamin Backus, et al.

WELCOME



Please stand as you are able.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, the Word made flesh, our life and our salvation.
Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Reconciling God,
we yearn for your presence to transform
our grief, pain, and despair.
We confess that we have not always prepared
room in our hearts for your love;
we have not always recognized
your presence among us;
we have not always embraced your message of peace.
We cry out, weary with the burden of violence,
oppression, and fear.
We confess our failure to make room
for those seeking refuge;
our participation in violent systems
that harm your innocent ones;
our reluctance to embody your good news.
Be born in us today
and teach us to sing the joyful song of your salvation.
Amen.

God's grace upon grace flows over you.
✝ Christ's presence redeems the whole creation.
Your sins are forgiven. Let the earth rejoice and be glad!
Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given.

And he shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Today, we know God comes among us – and makes a difference in our lives.

On this wondrous night, we know God is even now birthing within us the gifts of true hope, peace, joy, and love.

So we light our Christ candle, as a symbol of the light which shines forth in our darkness and no darkness will overcome it.

O living Christ, come and dwell richly among us this holy night! Help us to recognize those gracious gifts which come only from you. Empower us, we pray, to share those gifts with all. Amen.

WELCOME SONG

MY SOUL MAGNIFIES THE LORD

Good news of great joy for ev'ry woman, ev'ry man;
This will be a sign to you: a baby born in Bethlehem.
Come and worship, do not be afraid.

A company of angels, "Glory in the highest!"
And on earth, a peace among
Those whom His favor rests.
Come and worship, do not be afraid.

REFRAIN

My soul, my soul magnifies the Lord, my soul magnifies the Lord.
He has done great things for me, great things for me.

Unto you, a child is born, unto us, a Son is giv'n;
Let ev'ry heart prepare His throne, let ev'ry nation under Heav'n
Come and worship, do not be afraid. *(refrain 3 times)*

He has done great things!

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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.
Amen.

✠ ✠ ✠ WORD ✠ ✠ ✠

Please be seated.

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 9:2-7

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shined. ³You 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. ⁴For 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. ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For 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. ⁷His authority shall grow continually, 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.

SECOND LESSON

Titus 2:11-14

¹¹For 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, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He 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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL SONG

GLORY BE TO GOD ON HIGH



Glo - ry be to God on high. Peace, good-will to all the earth. Let us sing a
Love has come to dwell with us. Light now shines on ev - 'ry - one. Hope has lift - ed



joy - ful song to the Christ, the Liv - ing Word. Glo - - -
up our hearts. Joy has made, in us, a home.



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



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

GOSPEL READING

Luke 2:1-7

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph 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. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And 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.

CAROL

WHAT CHILD IS THIS

What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring Him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary.

Why lies he in such mean estate, where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear, shall pierce Him through; the cross be borne for me, for you;
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, the Babe, the Son of Mary.

So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh; come, peasant, king, to own Him;
The King of kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone Him.
Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby;
Joy, joy for Christ is born, the Babe, the Son of Mary.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And 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!"

CAROL

HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all you nations, rise; Join the triumph of the skies;
With angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; Hail incarnate Deity,
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings, ris'n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by, born that we no more may die,
Born to raise each child of earth, born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Born to raise each child of earth, born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the new... born... King!"

GOSPEL READING

Luke 2:15-20

¹⁵When 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." ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Pastor Jonathan Bull

Please stand as you are able.

SERMON CAROL IT CAME UPON THE MIDNIGHT CLEAR

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav'n's all-gracious king."
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heav'nly music floats o'er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hov'ring wing,
And ever o'er its babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

And you, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow:
Look now, for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing;
Oh, rest beside the weary road and hear the angels sing!

For lo! The days are hast'ning on, by prophets seen of old,
When with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold,
When peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
And all the world give back the song which now the angels sing.

NICENE CREED

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Empowered by the news of Christ's birth, let us pray boldly for the church, creation, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Gathering God, you bring your people from every corner of the earth together before the manger that you have made a throne. Unite the church in love as we rejoice in the news of your coming. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Creating God, you brought forth the earth and all that is in it. Join our voices with the roaring seas, the exulting fields, and the trees of the forest singing for joy on this holy night. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Transforming God, the world trembles amid violence and war. Empower our hands, feet, and hearts with your Spirit to shatter the rod of the oppressor and turn swords into plowshares. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Shepherding God, you lead us to your love in the face of our neighbor. Send us into the world to find your Word made flesh in one another, especially those who are sick or struggling especially those we name silently or spoken. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Nurturing God, you dwell with us in humble places. Sustain housing and clothing ministries in this community, that all find shelter and warmth. We pray especially for youth seeking safety and care. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Abiding God, you remain at the side of all the departed. Grant all who mourn hope in the resurrection and peace in Christ Jesus. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

With the joy of Christ's birth in our hearts, we commend our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your boundless mercy and eternal love; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

Please be seated.

OFFERING

OFFERING SONG I HEARD THE BELLS ON CHRISTMAS DAY

LEADERS ONLY:

I heard the bells on Christmas day,
Their old familiar carols play.
And mild and sweet their songs repeat
Of peace on earth, good will to men.
And the bells are ringing. (Peace on earth.)
Like a choir they're singing. (Peace on earth.)
In my heart I hear them. (Peace on earth.)
Peace on earth, good will to men.

And in despair I bowed my head.
There is no peace on earth I said.
For hate is strong, and mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good will to men.
But the bells are ringing. (Peace on earth.)
Like a choir singing (Peace on earth.)
Does anybody hear them? (Peace on earth.)
Peace on earth, good will to men.

Then rang the bells more loud and deep
God is not dead, nor does He sleep (Peace on earth, Peace on earth)
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail,
With peace on earth, good will to men.
Then ringing singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day.
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

Continues on the next page

ALL:

And the bells they're ringing. (Peace on earth.)

Like a choir they're singing. (Peace on earth.)

And with our hearts we'll hear them. (Peace on earth.)

Peace on earth, good will to men.

Do you hear the bells they're ringing? (Peace on earth.)

The life the angels singing. (Peace on earth.)

Open up your heart and hear them. (Peace on earth.)

Peace on earth, good will to men.

Peace on earth, peace on earth.

Peace on earth, good will to men.

Please stand as you are able.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

God of glory,

great are your wonders among us

and many are the blessings you bestow.

Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world,

that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace,

through Christ our Savior.

Amen.

✠ ✠ ✠ MEAL ✠ ✠ ✠

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

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.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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

This is the table, not of the church, but of the Lord
It is made ready for those who love God
and for those who want to love God more.
So come, you who have much faith
and you who have little;
You who have been here often
and you who have not been here long;
You who have tried to follow
and you who have failed.
Come, because it is the Lord who invites you.

Please be seated.

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**
The blood of Christ, shed for you. **Amen.**

COMMUNION SONGS

LAMB OF GOD

Jesus, Lamb of God, you take away our sin.
Lord, have mercy on us, and may your peace be with us.
Jesus, Lamb of God, you take away our sin.
Jesus, Lamb of God, grant us all your heavenly peace.

HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING

arr. Dan forest

Susan Treer and Zach Ruppel, piano duet

PANIS ANGELICUS

by Cesar Franck

Ashley Rudd, cello, and Dr. Philip Rudd, violin

Please stand as you are able.

POST COMMUNION BLESSING

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

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray.

Incarnate God, you are among us at this table.

May we treasure this gift and ponder in our hearts
the mystery of your presence.

Move us to discover the wonders of your love
in the everyday moments of our lives,
through Christ born in us.

Amen.

✠ ✠ SERVICE OF LIGHTS ✠ ✠

For the Service of Lights, follow the direction of the pastor. Turn on your candle when directed.

SCRIPTURE READING

John 1:1-14

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. ⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴And 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

SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT!

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

radiant beams from Thy holy face

with the dawn of redeeming grace.

Jesus, Lord at Thy birth. Jesus, Lord at Thy birth

THE CHRISTMAS PRAYER

Let us pray.

O Lord our God, with Mary and Joseph, angels and shepherds, and the animals in the stable, we gather around your Son, born for us. Bless us with your holy presence, and inspire us to help those who have no place to dwell. Be with us that we might share Christ's love with all the world, for He is our light and salvation. Glory in heaven and peace on earth, now and forever.

Amen.

✠ ✠ ✠ **SENDING** ✠ ✠ ✠

BLESSING

The blessing of almighty God, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever.

Amen.

-Please turn off your candles-

SENDING SONG

JOY TO THE WORLD (Unspeakable Joy)

Joy to the world! The Lord is come; Let earth receive her King.
Let ev'ry heart Prepare Him room,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the world! The Savior reigns; Let all their songs employ.
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

CHORUS

Joy, unspeakable joy! An overflowing well; No tongue can tell!
Joy, unspeakable joy! It rises in my soul, never lets me go!
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!
Joy, unspeakable joy! Overflowing joy, unspeakable joy!
Rising in me, joy, unspeakable joy!

DISMISSAL

Christ is born! Go!
Experience God's Love!

POST-SERVICE MUSIC

GOD REST YE MERRY, GENTLEMEN AND WE THREE KINGS

St. Paul Praise Team

Traditional
arr. Page et. al

**Christmas Poinsettias decorate the church today,
given by friends and congregation members.**

In memory of our parents

Given by Don & Annette Roth

In memory of German Acree

Given by Carole Williams

In memory of Harlin & June Bade

Given by Phil Baden

In memory of our parents

Given by Rev. Gary & Barb Grieger

In memory of Harry & Amanda Gill

Given by Juanita Martin

In memory of husband Dean

Given by Betsy Gram

In memory of Kathy Rollo &

Rev. John Zimmerman

Given by Becky, Jamie, & John Rollo

In memory of Karl & Maryanne Schott

Given by Jane Schott

In memory of Theresia Wilke

Given by Fred Wilke

In memory of Rev. Jim & Jackie Graeser &

Herb & Kay Longfellow

Given by Joy, Bob, & Matthew

Longfellow

In memory of Dennie Dittiacur & parents

Given by Becki Wilke

In memory of Joan O'Neil

Given by Mary Lanese

In memory of Arlene Roser

Given by Jim Roser

In memory of loved ones

Given by Steve Derwent & Pam Sites

In memory of Jerry Graves

Given by Denise & Ted Edwards

In memory of loved ones

Given by Randy & Marleen Schiefer

In memory of my parents

Given by Faith Kappeler – McCafferty

In memory of Alice Appel

Given by Dave, Rita, Jackson, & Annie
Gram

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joy

TO THE
WORLD

Merry Christmas
St. Paul Lutheran Church Staff



As we cultivate welcoming communities of faith with our neighbors and world, we strive for a world where everyone **"Experiences God's Love"**.

HOLY COMMUNION

We celebrate Holy Communion at every service. We welcome you to join us at the table of the Lord. Our Communion Bread is gluten, peanut, tree nut, soy, and dairy-free. **White grape juice is always available in the center of the tray.** All are welcome.

NURSERY

The nursery is located at the top of the ramp of the main entrance to the church. Currently, the nursery is not staffed, however, it is available for you to use with your child. Also, for our young worshippers, please find **Worship Wonder Bags** on the small coat rack in the rear of the sanctuary, untie, and enjoy. After worship, please put the **UNTIED bag back** on the rack to be replenished and cleaned.

Online giving to St. Paul is available: Using your mobile device, scan below or Text **SPLCGIVE** to **73256**.

CONTACTS

Pastor Jonathan Bull, 614-886-5364,
jon.bull@splcwesterville.org

Pastor Gary Grieger, 989-350-8411,
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Karla Kruse, 614-882-7601,
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Zach Ruppel, 614-882-7601,
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Amy Drake, 614-882-7601,
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Prayer requests may be sent to
prayer@splcwesterville.org

MUSIC STAFF

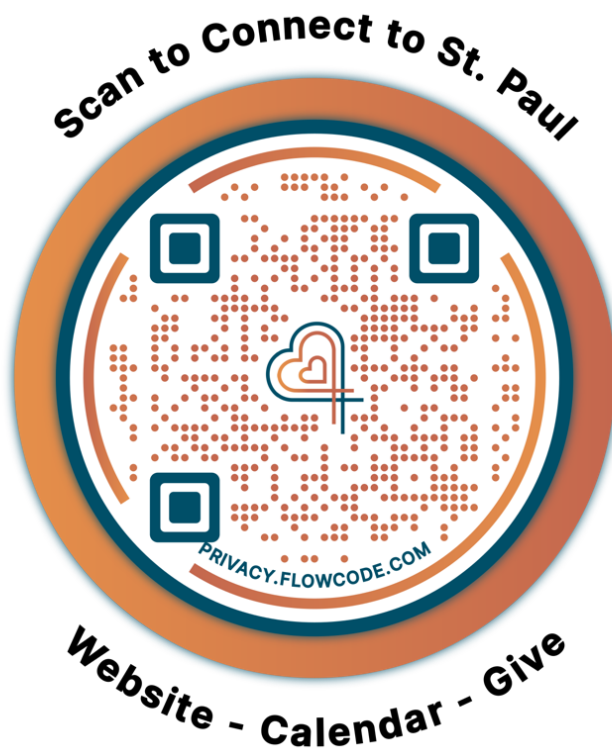
Karla Kruse, Director of Music Ministries

Judy McLeod, Handbell Director

Zach Ruppel, Director of Contemporary Music

Philip Cordell, Organist

Susan Treer, Contemporary Keyboardist



Church Office: M-F 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM
Closed for lunch: 12 PM- 1 PM

Please contact us if you have any questions. Check out the web site for more information. St. Paul Lutheran Church is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.